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ISSUE #105 • DECEMBER 2003

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FEATURING

JOHN SIMCOE • MONTE LIN • KEITH BAKER

In This Issue

Dungeon

"From his hours of sitting at the foot of the table, Fafhrd had learned that most of the spells were designed to inflict a noisome disease upon Gwaay: the Black Plague, the Red Plague, the Boneless Death, the Hairless Decline, the Slow Rot, the Fast Rot, the Green Rot, the Bloody Cough, the Belly Melts, the Ague, the Runs, and even the footling Nose Drip...."

The Lords of Quarmall
Fritz Leiber

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John Simcoe

A merchant's daughter faces an assassination threat. Will you lead her would-be killer on a chase through the treacherous Yatil Mountains while she makes good her escape? A D&D adventure for 6th-level PCs.

The Stink 44

Monte Lin

The city of Suncliff has so much trash they've devoted an entire quarter to it, naming the reeking ruins "the Stink" and piling garbage as high as the eye can see.But sanitation workers have been vanishing from the Stink at night, and only your heroes hold the key to solving the smelly mystery. A D&D adventure for 4th-level PCs.

On the Cover: *All hail Warduke! Our cover model first burst onto the D&D scene in the era of Colorforms and pencil-on tattoos. Warduke and D&D superstar Wayne Reynolds take us way back to 1983.*

PRISON MAIL

Tell us what you think of this issue. Write to: Prison Mail, Paizo Publishing, 3245 146th Place SE, Suite 110, Bellevue, WA 98007 or send an email to dungeon@paizopublishing.com.

Corrections!

We're not perfect! Every once in a while, a goof-up in production makes us look like enormous idiots, and issue #103 had a couple doozies we still regret. While we're at it, we also messed up one of the feats in issue #100's *Knights of the Lich-Queen* Mini-Game. Thanks to all our readers who kept us honest by pointing out our mistakes. We'll do our best to avoid a repeat performance.

Knights of the Lich-Queen (#100): In the "better late than never" category, we inadvertently reproduced the same feat with two different names in our Incursion mini-game. The following replaces the feat of the same name on page 22.

Greater Combat Reflexes [General]

You react to any drop in your opponent's guard with blinding speed.

Prerequisites: Combat Reflexes, Improved Combat Reflexes, Dex 15, base attack bonus +11.

Benefit: For any given opportunity in melee combat, you can make three attacks of opportunity. The second attack is at a –5 penalty, and the third is at a –10 penalty, just like your second and third normal attacks in any given round. You still cannot exceed your normal maximum number of attacks of opportunity in a round.

"Glacial Inferno" (#103): The map of the Halls of Huhueteotl seems to have been cursed, at it contained no fewer than three errors. Areas **10** and **10a** are the small rooms incorrectly labeled area **18** in the bottom right-hand corner of the map. Area **14**, unlabeled on the map, is the southernmost center room with the pool. Lastly, area **20** is incorrectly labeled area **28** on the map. When it rains the fires of Huhueteotl, apparently, it pours. Sorry about the mix-up.

We also inadvertently left off a paragraph about the *frozen soul* on page 35. Here's the missing text:

The *frozen soul* can be devastating to the local climate. Crops are quite sensitive to temperature changes, and even the 10-degree drop can be devastating to local farms. Outside 10 miles the cold front generated by the artifact continually collides with warm air masses, spawning tornadoes, wicked thunderstorms, and paralyzing ice storms.

Strong conjuration and evocation; CL 20th; Weight 1 oz.

Phew! Let's have a letter...

Shopping list

One, letters on sexual orientation? What the heck's up with that?

Two, although I don't really care much for *Polyhedron*, I have learned recently to tolerate it. That *Millennium Falcon* article [issue #103] was awesome, even if I don't play in a *Star Wars* RPG. I also occasionally use the *Living Greyhawk* stuff. I would, however,

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love to see "Downer" more than once every other issue. It's a great piece of work. "Bolt and Quiver" are also amusing (most of the time).

Three, Critical Threats are great and all, but don't overload them in the magazine, please. Maps of Mystery, however, are one of the greatest ideas of all time. I'm glad you reprinted the "Halls of Huhueteotl." I was wondering what was the heck was going on in issue 84. Now I know. I like when you number the rooms also. It sure beats black pen. The Town of Deepwatch was very well done.

Four, what the heck is "Mount Zogon"? I don't know, but it sure is wicked funny! Keep them coming.

Five, the art for "Forest of Blood" was fantastic. I would very much like to see more from Niklas Janssen. And more DiTerlizzi. Where's he been?

Six, the Adventure Path rocks. Great idea. I love the concept of the web enhancements as well. I don't think they should be necessary, but I would like them to remain available.

Sev... why bother? Monster tokens. What happened to them? Bring em' back. If anything, make that the special subscriber section. I love finding surprises in the pages.

I miss the "glory" days of *Dungeon*. It was great between issues 69–75, and then wasn't so great, then great again, at its peak in my opinion, between issues 84–92. A lot of content, good content, and usable. You guys are still good, but you're slowly falling. I love some of the new stuff, but it's not the same as the old. Sorry about the vagueness. And more higher level content, 15+. Good adventures that high are hard to write, I know, but surely something has come in you can use. Maybe one 15+ adventure every other issue?? Maybe you could even reprint some of the old adventures from second edition. It would be easier than converting, trust me.

Thanks for hearing me out, and, even if the quality falls more, I will continue to be a loyal subscriber.

Oliver Heintz
Via Email

Thanks for writing, Oliver! It's certainly our intention to bring you great adventures and mini-games, and we have high hopes that the "glory days" will be returning any issue now. We've got some staggeringly cool plans in the works. My typing fingers all itchy just thinking about them. You'll start to get a sense of what I'm talking about next issue, so stay tuned.

As to some of your specific points, we're also fans of "Downer," "Mt. Zogon," and "Bolt & Quiver," and these features will appear here as often as possible. Don't forget "Nodwick," which appears every other month.

As you can tell with this issue, we're tinkering a bit with the format of Critical Threats to make them more useful to everyone. Let us know how we're doing!

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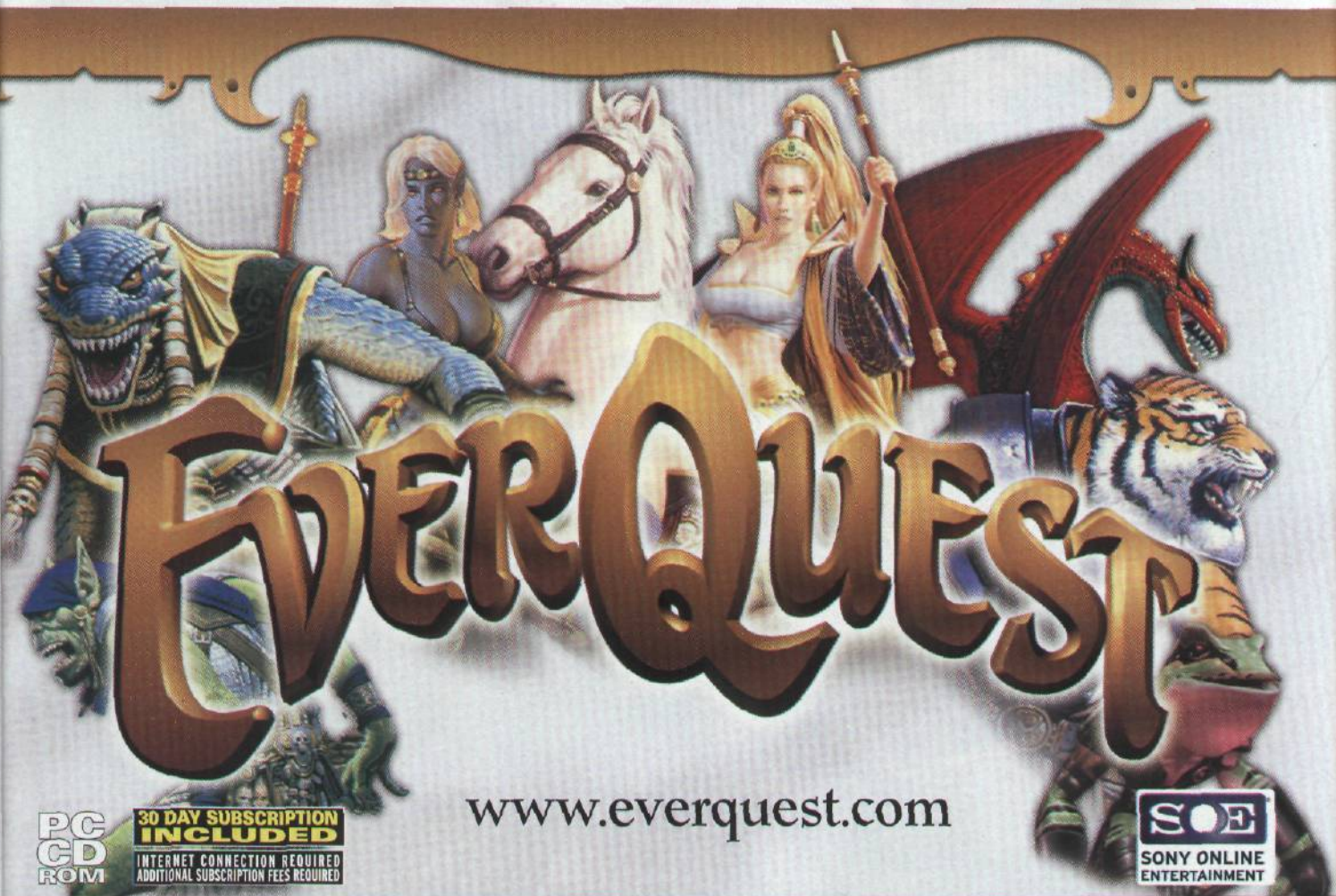
Submissions: Interested in writing for the magazine? Download our submission guidelines by visiting the *Dungeon* homepage at www.paizo.com/dungeon.



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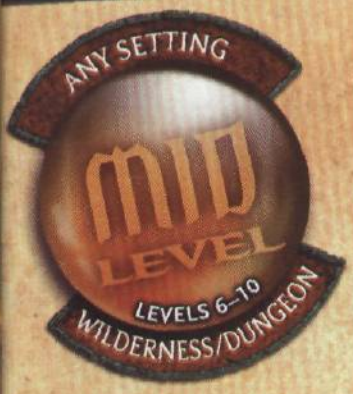


RACING THE SNAKE

BY JOHN SIMCOE

ARTWORK BY JEFF CARLISLE, ANDREW HOU & ARNOLD TSANG
CARTOGRAPHY BY ROB LAZZARETTI

"Racing the Snake" is a D&D adventure for four 6th-level player characters. Characters who survive the entire adventure should amass enough experience points to advance more than half-way to seventh level. This adventure is particularly ideal for druids, rangers, and other characters who have wilderness skills.

Although this adventure is set in the GREYHAWK campaign setting, it can be adapted for any campaign world that features two cities separated by a large mountain range. The adventure can also be modified for characters of higher and lower levels as described in the "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

For several years, the merchants Bradford Trend and Dajoud Vasilis have been embroiled in a vicious trade war. The conflict began as a simple competition on who could outbid who or who could drop his prices the lowest. Somewhere along the way, it changed from the give-and-take nature of commerce into a deadly grudge match between two merchants who refused to grant the other quarter.

Vasilis was the first to turn violent, and his initial successes have only fueled his aggression. He organized squads of soldiers to attack Trend's caravans and bribed city guards to impound some of Trend's goods. Vasilis even hired an assassin to eliminate his rival.

This assassin is a yuan-ti halfblood named Maliss. The creature's initial attempt on Trend's life was thwarted, but the affair forced him to realize that his desperate financial game with Vasilis could result in more than just business expenses. Fearing an attack against his family, Trend arranged for his daughter Felicia to marry into a powerful merchant family based in his former hometown of Highfolk, east across the formidable Yatil Mountains. Trend hopes that Felicia can live in safety there, protected by her new family in ways he can't afford.

Unfortunately, Trend recently discovered that Felicia may not live to reach Highfolk. Vasilis has made several death threats against her, and Trend's spies have reported that Maliss has been hired to assassinate her. This latest development forced Trend to formulate a desperate plan to keep his daughter safe. While she is secreted away to a rendezvous at the nearby city of Falwur where she'll be married, Trend plans to send a decoy to Highfolk in hopes this will lure the assassin away from his daughter.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs witness an ambush while visiting the city of Polvar. The victim, a bard named Galina and an employee of Trend's, notes that one of the PCs is similar in appearance to Trend's daughter, and pleads with them to help. She arranges for the PCs to meet her employer later that night.

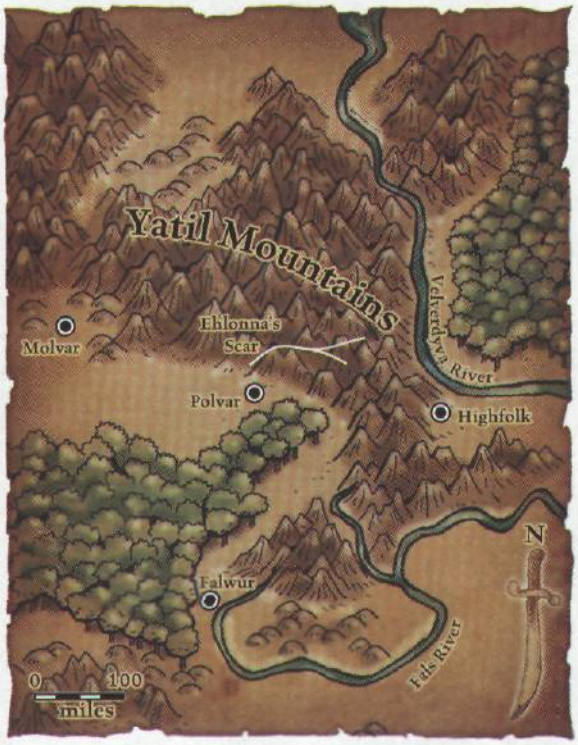
Once the party is properly briefed and one of them is disguised as Felicia, they set out of the city, luring Maliss away from his true target and into a canyon that cuts through the Yatil Mountains. This canyon, known as Ehlonna's Scar, is a little-used alternate route to Highfolk. It's a difficult and dangerous journey; the typical overland route to Highfolk from Polvar is south to Falwur, east along the Fals River and then up the Velverdyva River—a journey of several hundred miles. Trend plans to take this route with his daughter in secret, while the PCs take the faster route through the Scar to draw off Maliss' attention.

The key to this adventure is not only keeping Maliss' attention away from his actual quarry, but keeping him alive long enough that Vasilis doesn't become aware of his failure before Felicia is wedded and safe. There are numerous opportunities in Ehlonna's Scar to delay Maliss, yet just as many that could delay the PCs long enough for the yuan-ti to catch up to them and discover the deception.

Even if the PCs reach Highfolk successfully, Vasilis has arranged a deadly welcoming committee for anyone who tries to enter the city secretly via the underground port at the terminus of Ehlonna's Scar.

CHAPTER ONE: TROUBLE IN POLVAR

This adventure begins in Polvar's marketplace, a cacophonous open square featuring a vast array of brilliantly colored woven mats, each with its own merchant, snake charmer, foodmonger, or acrobat. The exact reasons for the PCs to be in the market-



place are incidental to the fact that they witness a sudden attack. Read or paraphrase the following to the PCs.

> The normal hustle and bustle keeps the square busy, as meat-cutters hawk their best steaks and the apothecaries offer their finest elixirs. Suddenly, a nearby scream breaks the market's rhythm. To the northeast, six men dressed in red tunics and scale mail have tackled a woman and scramble to bind her with ropes. The woman, who wears a cloak and has an expensive-looking lyre strapped to her back, struggles frantically to free herself.
>
> The crowd surges away from the scene in panic, leaving the market open between you.

Creatures (EL 6): These six thugs are fighters who work for Vasilis, and their victim is a human bard named Galina. The thugs have been tracking Galina for some time, and know that she works for Bradford Trend; Vasilis in fact hired them to kidnap her and bring her to Maliss so the yuan-ti could interrogate her and find out when and how Trend planned to move his daughter to Highfolk.

Vasilis Thugs, Male and Female Human Ftr2 (6): CR 2; Medium humanoids (human); *HD* 2d10+4; hp 16 each; Init +1; Spd 20 ft; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d8+2, masterwork heavy mace) or +4 ranged (1d4+2 nonlethal, masterwork bolas); AL CN; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Intimidate +5, Jump –2, Ride +6.

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bolas), Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Power Attack.

Possessions: Masterwork heavy mace, masterwork bolas, scale mail, two *potions of cure moderate wounds*, 2 gp, 4 sp.

Galina, Female Human Brd4: CR 4; Medium humanoid (human); HD 4d6+4; hp 16; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +3; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d6–1, masterwork short sword); SA spells, *fascinate*; SQ bardic music, bardic knowledge, countersong, inspire competence, inspire courage +1; AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +10, Concentration +8, Diplomacy +16, Disguise +10 (+12 acting), Gather Information +12, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (local) +9, Perform (string instrument) +13, Sense Motive +9, Sleight of Hand +10.

Feats: Negotiator, Skill Focus (Perform), Weapon Finesse.

Bard Spells Known (3/3/1; save DC 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, ghost sound, lullaby, message, read magic, resistance*; 1—*comprehend languages, disguise self, unseen servant*; 2—*detect thoughts, invisibility*.

Possessions: Masterwork short sword, masterwork studded leather armor, *cloak of resistance +1*, *wand of cure light wounds* (42 charges), *wand of silent image* (10 charges), *potion of tongues*, masterwork lyre, belt pouch with 32 gp and 17 pp.

Tactics: The thugs have been ordered to capture Galina as quickly as possible; they don't expect anyone in the marketplace to try to stop them. If the characters intervene, they fight back with a little surprise, and retreat if more than half are disabled or slain. As they flee, one of the thugs calls out over his shoulder, "Vasilis has had enough of this! Tell Trend his daughter's dead the second she steps foot outside Polvar."

As the PCs help Galina back to her feet, she thanks them, but seems rushed and preoccupied with moving along. Suddenly, her eyes widen as she sees one of the characters of your choice. She quickly regains her composure and explains that her employer, one of the better-known "foreign" merchants in Polvar, has a terrible problem. A problem she feels that they are in a unique position to solve. She apologizes and tells them that it's not safe to speak of these matters in the street, but invites the characters to meet with her employer that evening at 10:00 PM at an old dry goods warehouse with yellow doors on the Avenue of Whispers. She tells them that the job she has in mind for them involves a three- to four-day journey through the mountains and underground, and that they should be prepared for a fair amount of climbing. She also tells them that her employer is prepared to give them 500 gp just for hearing him out, and that they should be ready to set off on the mission immediately after the meeting tonight.

Galina then dismisses herself and says she'll go and speak with her employer about setting up the meeting. The PCs have the remainder of the day to organize themselves and obtain all the supplies they need. If the PCs decide to follow Galina, roll her Spot check frequently since she's still a bit nervous about being jumped by more of Vasilis' goons. If she spots the PCs following her, she asks them to back off since if she can see them, Vasilis' thugs can see them and she doesn't want to attract any more attention than events have already attracted.

If the PCs investigate the warehouse during normal hours, they find it to be buzzing with the normal business of the day. The workers know little about their employer, other than his name (Bradford Trend) and that he's feuding with another merchant (Dajoud Vasilis).

If any of Vasilis' thugs escaped from the PCs earlier, they gather more of their kin and ambush the PCs themselves in vengeance for their earlier interference. This new batch of thugs consists of two thugs per player character; use the statistics listed above for Vasilis' Thugs. As they spring the attack, the thugs shout threats like, "You arrogantly involve yourself in things that do not concern you!" or, "Trend never did have a lot of friends, and now he'll have a few less!"

MEETING ON THE AVENUE OF WHISPERS

Night brings silence to the Avenue of Whispers. A few night watchmen patrol the perimeter of their respective businesses, and what few passers-by still walk the street move hurriedly toward more populated and better-lighted sections of Polvar.

A large building looms over the street here, a massive rectangular structure with a stone foundation about 15 feet high. A second story of wooden planks adds another 15 feet to the height. The warehouse has no windows, and only two yellow doors. One's obviously for foot traffic, while the other much larger door is apparently for large shipments. Signs above each door read "Bradford Trend Imports" in fancy red lettering.

Two night watchmen armed with longswords walk together in the shadows around the building.

One of the night watchmen patrolling the warehouse is actually Galina disguised as a guardsman. When she sees the PCs approach, she quickly approaches them and leads them through the smaller door, where Bradford Trend (male human Exp4) and six of his guards (male and female human Ftr1) wait.

Trend is a lavishly dressed thin human in his early 40s. His fingers are decorated with several rings. He keeps his dull blonde hair long and untied. Trend welcomes the adventurers, and asks them to follow him up a short flight of stairs to his office. Galina accompanies them.

Once in the office, Trend sits down at a large cluttered desk and hands a sack of 500 gp to the characters in thanks for hearing him out. He then explains why he needs the PCs' help: Galina noticed earlier in the day that one of the PCs is similar in size and build to Trend's daughter, Felicia. Trend gets right to the point—he wants this character to disguise himself or herself as his daughter and lead a would-be assassin into the wilderness while his daughter is escorted safely to another city. You should select a Medium female PC as the character who most looks like Felicia; if there are no such PCs in the group, simply pick the PC who most closely approximates the size and shape of a human woman. Remember that a disguise that incorporates

PERSONALITIES OF POLVAR

Trend

Vasilis

Galina

a different gender or race suffers a cumulative +2 to the Disguise check DC (*Player's Handbook* 73).

Trend explains that this ruse is required so that his daughter can arrive safely at a secret wedding location some distance from Highfolk. His nemesis Dajoud Vasilis has been attempting to run Trend out of business for some time now, and recently his attempts have taken a turn for the violent. Several of Trend's caravans have been attacked and many of his employees have been killed. Vasilis even hired a yuan-ti assassin named Maliss to kill Trend, but fortunately the attempt on his life failed. Now Trend's daughter, Felicia, has become the target of Vasilis' aggression, and a contract has been placed on her life.

Trend adds that he's gone to the city constables several times with his problems, but they've been unresponsive, openly siding with the popular Baklunish merchant Vasilis and deriding his protests as the ungentlemanly complaints of an ignorant foreigner. "These westerners," he tells the PCs, "are not like you or me."

Since Vasilis uses local street gangs for assistance, it's hard to link the trouble Trend has experienced back to Vasilis. Trend fears that the constables, and perhaps even Polvar's political leadership, have been bribed to stay out of the conflict.

Trend feels that he can protect himself from danger, but he knows he can't protect his daughter if she remains in town, so he has arranged for her to marry the son of Alec Brisbane, a famous merchant in the free city of Highfolk. Not only will this move strengthen Trend's own business, but it gets his daughter out of Polvar and under the protection of one of the most powerful merchant families in the region.

If the PCs suggest having Vasilis killed, Trend explains that he doesn't share Vasilis' taste for murder, and notes that acting openly against a native merchant would spoil his access to the fertile markets of the Baklunish West. In any case, Vasilis is reputed to be a powerful sorcerer in addition to a canny merchant, and his home is in the fairly distant city of Molvar—so it would be difficult to reach him in time to save his daughter.

Trend's plan to trick Maliss with a decoy is not without risk. He needs someone to disguise him or herself as his daughter and then to lead Maliss into a "shortcut" to Highfolk. This shortcut leads through a largely untraveled canyon and into a dangerous and confusing underground river, eventually connecting to an underground lake below the Free Town of Highfolk. Trend has secretly arranged to have his daughter's wedding in the town of Falwur, but as long as Vasilis (and by extension Maliss) believes she is being escorted to Highfolk via this shortcut, she should be safe.

Trend impresses upon the PCs that they must keep Maliss distracted for at least 3 days. As long as the yuan-ti killer believes he's on the trail, Vasilis won't expend further energy trying to track down Felicia; the yuan-ti's services don't come cheaply. Should Maliss be slain or permanently incapacitated, however, Vasilis will be forced to start over and will quickly uncover the deception. Trend knows that Vasilis is keeping a close eye on Maliss after his recent failure, and that Vasilis is using a pair of *status rings* (see the "New Magic Items" sidebar) to keep track of his assassin's health. Trend also believes that Vasilis remains in regular contact with Maliss by using *sending* spells regularly. Once 3 days have passed, Felicia will be beyond Vasilis' reach and Maliss' fate becomes a matter of the PCs' discretion.

Trend would like the PCs to set out on the mission immediately. Assuming they accept his offer, he calls out and a woman wearing a heavy hooded cloak and robe enters the room from another door, along with her escort of guards. This is Felicia. Trend provides the PCs with three *potions of disguise self* (caster level 4) brewed by Galina to aid in their deception, but warns them that because they only last for 40 minutes, the potions should be kept for emergencies. Felicia carries a dagger, but isn't

a trained combatant so whomever assumes her disguise shouldn't carry any obvious weapons or wear any obvious armor.

Trend tells the PCs he's prepared to reward them with 6,000 gp if they can delay Maliss for the next 3 days. The characters can try to bargain for a higher fee; Trend's current attitude is friendly but if he can be made helpful with a successful Diplomacy check (DC 20), he raises his reward to 8,000 gp.

Trend also presents the party with a letter, addressed to "The Druid of Ehlonna's Scar." This letter promises the druid that he will be repaid for any assistance he gives to the bearers of the note, especially for any help he can provide in navigating the Skuttlerun River. Trend explains that the druid, whose name he's unsure of, is known to help travellers get through the region. Finally, Trend can supply light horses to any characters who don't already have mounts.

THE DISGUISE

The most important thing for the characters to maintain during the next 3 days is the disguise. Once you determine which character will assume the disguise, you should roll the check in secret to determine its success. A character can take 10 on this check, but he cannot take 20 since there is a definite penalty for failure.

Felicia is an adult human female; for each of these categories (age, race, and gender) that the character doesn't share in common with her, the disguise check has a –2 penalty.

Maliss has a base Spot check result of +24. He recognizes Felicia on sight (and thus gains a +4 bonus on Spot checks to penetrate the disguise), and knows that she's an aristocrat with little combat training and no magic skills. If he sees the disguised character fight with any level of skill or use magic, he gains another +4 bonus on his Spot check to see through the disguise. Spells like *disguise self* are quite helpful in offsetting Maliss' keen eyes, but the party's greatest ally in maintaining the deception is keeping some distance between Maliss and the disguise; remember that for every 10 feet of distance between the yuan-ti and the disguise, he suffers a –1 penalty on his Spot check. Maliss typically takes 10 on his Spot checks; he only rolls if he sees something strange, such as "Felicia" casting spells.

If Maliss discovers the deception, he immediately returns to Polvar to pick up Felicia's actual trail. The next time Vasilis contacts him with a *sending*, Maliss reports the development. The PCs could still prevent him from killing Felicia if this occurs, but they'll have to track the yuan-ti and catch up with him before they can stop him.

LEAVING POLVAR

Maliss knows that Trend plans to wed Felicia to a powerful family in Highfolk, and he knows that if she reaches the city and the protection of that family he won't be able to kill her without great risk to himself. He suspects that Trend is preparing to sneak her out of the city, and has agents hidden throughout Polvar watching and waiting for Trend to make his move. Maliss is watching Trend's mansion himself, fully expecting Trend and his daughter to emerge. He has no idea that Trend has already moved his daughter to the warehouse. Nevertheless, he has not left the warehouse unattended. He has had Jun-Olip, one of his kobold minions, station a raven familiar nearby.

Trend wants the PCs, including the disguised "Felicia," to visibly but quickly leave the warehouse and make for Elhonna's Scar immediately. As the PCs leave the warehouse, the raven observes them. Jun-Olip is less than a mile away. He senses this development via his empathic bond with the raven, and immediately informs Maliss. This move surprises Maliss, and it takes him about an hour to gather his kobolds and gear and set out after the PCs. Despite this initial delay, Maliss will have numerous opportunities to catch up to the characters.

CHAPTER TWO: EHLONNA'S SCAR

The journey to Ehlonna's Scar is split into three stages.

The first stage involves the journey from Polvar to Ehlonna's Scar. This section of the journey should pose little problem to the characters; the ground is relatively flat and open. The distance from Polvar to the Scar is 10 miles. The terrain is hilly, but there's a faint trail that the characters can follow. Travel speeds are 3/4 normal in this stage.

The second stage comprises the bulk of this chapter; Ehlonna's Scar is a fairly dangerous region, and there are numerous distractions and denizens within that can slow down the characters. Even without these distractions, the terrain inside the scar is fairly rough; travel speeds here are 3/4 normal as well.

The third stage is detailed in chapter three; this stage consists of a journey along an underground river that eventually leads to a subterranean port below Highfolk. Details on travel times for this section can be found in chapter three.

You should study the rules for overland movement on pages 162–164 of the *Player's Handbook* before running this adventure. Travel times are summarized here, assuming the characters are riding light horses with a speed of 60 ft.; if this isn't the case, you'll need to adjust travel times appropriately. Maliss travels in a chariot for the majority of the trip. His chariot is drawn by a light warhorse, and his kobold minions ride light warhorses as well; the base speed of this group is 60 ft. While Maliss is tracking, however, it drops to 30 ft. unless he takes a –5 penalty on his Survival check.

THE TRAIL

Maliss follows the PCs using his Track feat (*Player's Handbook* 101), or follows them by sight. Smart PCs do their best to keep ahead of him, yet give him ample clues as to where they are heading. The ground between Polvar and Ehlonna's Scar is firm, but once the characters reach the canyon the ground becomes hard. Once the characters reach the canyon, Maliss picks up the pace and moves at normal speed, incurring a –5 penalty on Survival checks to track the characters.

Jun-Olip's raven familiar also follows the party at a distance of 200 feet (–20 on Spot checks for distance). Jun-Olip stays in mental contact with his familiar as long as he's within one mile of the

raven. As long as Maliss is within sight of the PCs or Jun-Olip is within one mile of his familiar (and the familiar can see the PCs), Maliss is not required to make a Track check to follow them.

MOVING FROM ENCOUNTER TO ENCOUNTER

The title of each encounter area in this chapter is followed by several entries provided to aid in tracking the progress of the PCs and Maliss.

Travel Distance: This entry gives the distance between the encounter and the previous encounter. Both the PCs and Maliss must traverse this distance in order to reach the encounter in question.

Travel Time (30 ft.): This entry gives the approximate time required for a creature to travel from the previous encounter to the current encounter, assuming the traveler has a speed of 30 ft.

Travel Time (60 ft.): This entry gives the approximate time required for a creature to travel from the previous encounter to the current encounter, assuming the traveler has a speed of 60 ft.

Short Cut: This entry lists a Survival DC and a time increment. A character who makes the Survival DC finds a shortcut to the next encounter; this reduces the travel time to the next encounter by the listed time. Not all encounters have short cuts. This Survival check can be made only once per encounter. Of course, if the PCs take a short cut and then Maliss successfully tracks them, he gains the benefits of the short cut as well.

Delay: If the characters manage to bypass an encounter or otherwise leave its dangers for Maliss to encounter, the yuan-ti's progress is delayed by the time listed in this entry.

Attrition: This entry lists any casualties or loss of resources that Maliss and his minions suffer in the encounter. They try to conserve their resources for the inevitable confrontation with the PCs, but Maliss is quick to cure any wounded NPCs with charges from his *wand of cure moderate wounds*. The number of charges he uses during a delay are indicated as a die roll; if the wand is out of charges, reduce the hit points of each kobold and Maliss by the listed amount. Maliss generally takes less damage in these encounters. If an NPC is reduced to zero hit points, Maliss calls for an 8-hour rest. If an NPC is killed, Maliss redistributes that NPC's gear amongst the survivors and carries on.

RESTING

Because there are several spellcasters in Maliss's entourage, he must rest at least once a day for 8 hours. They do the majority of their travel during the night, resting from the hours of 9:00 AM to 6:30 PM; the additional 90 minutes is used to eat, set up camp, and prepare spells.

Maliss calls for an early rest if he or one of his entourage are badly wounded and need time to recover.

MALISS AND THE KOBOLDS (EL 11)

Maliss' group consists of himself and five kobold minions: Burogerk the barbarian, Gurken the fighter, and three sorcerers

named Alrughf, Jun-olip, and Krat. The six of them together present a formidable force that can easily overwhelm the PCs. As the chase proceeds, some of his kobold minions likely meet grisly ends. A wise party avoids any conflicts with this group until the last possible moment.

If at any point during the chase Maliss catches up to the characters, he immediately engages them. He uses his *nervewrack longbow* to attack "Felicia" at a range of up to 500 feet. Remember to apply the appropriate penalty to his attack rolls for such long range. His kobold sorcerers use their long-range spells or weapons against "Felicia" as well, although as needed they direct their attacks at anyone attempting to provide aid to their target. The group does its best to maintain range superiority, closing to melee only if it becomes obvious to them that their targets are helpless or weak.

Maliss, Male Yuan-ti Halfblood Rgr5: CR 10; Medium monstrous humanoid; HD 12d8+24; hp 70; Init +5; Spd 20 ft, climb 15, swim 15 ft; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +12; Grp +14; Atk +15 melee (1d6+3/18–20, masterwork scimitar wielded as a two-handed weapon) or +14 melee (1d6+2, tail) or +14 ranged (1d8+1/×3, *+1 nervewrack longbow*); Full Atk +15/+10/+5 melee (1d6+3/18–20, masterwork scimitar wielded as a two-handed weapon) and +9 melee (1d6+1, tail) or +14/+9/+4 ranged (1d8+1/×3, *+1 nervewrack longbow*); SA archery combat style, constrict 1d6+3, favored enemy (elves) +2, favored enemy (humans) +2, *produce acid*, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ *alternate form*, *chameleon power*, darkvision 60 ft., *detect poison*, scent, spell resistance 16, wild empathy +9; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +10; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 18.

Skills: Concentration +12, Climb +18 (+20 with ropes), Escape Artist +1 (+3 with ropes), Gather Information +6, Handle Animal +9, Hide +11 (+21 when using *chameleon power*), Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +14, Knowledge (nature) +12, Listen +14, Move Silently +10, Spot +24, Survival +16 (+18 in aboveground natural environments), Swim +18, Use Rope +10.

Feats: Alertness[B], Blind-Fight[B], Combat Expertise, Dodge, Endurance[B], Improved Initiative, Mobility, Rapid Shot[B], Spring Attack, Track[B].

Ranger Spells Prepared (1; save DC 14 + spell level): 1—*longstrider*.

Possessions: *+1 leather armor*, masterwork scimitar, *+1 nervewrack longbow*, 40 arrows, *ring of protection +1*, *ring of status*, *eyes of the eagle*, *wand of cure moderate wounds* (20 charges), 4 vials of blue whinnis poison, two gold armbands worth 1,000 gp each, 30 gp, garnet worth 300 gp.

Zortan, light warhorse animal companion: CR —; Large animal; HD 3d8+9; hp 25; Init +1; Spd 60 ft., AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +2; Grp +9; Atk +4 melee (1d4+3, hoof); Full Atk +4 melee (1d4+3, 2 hooves) and –1 melee (1d3+1, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SQ link, low-light vision, scent, share spells; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills: Listen +4, Spot +4.

Feats: Endurance, Run.

Tricks: Attack, Come, Defend, Down, Guard, Track, Work.

Alrughf, Male Kobold Sor4: CR 4; Small humanoid (reptilian); HD 4d4+4; hp 17; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +2; Grp –4; Atk +2 melee (1d3–2/19–20, masterwork small dagger); SA spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +2. Will +6; Str 6, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 15.

Skills: Concentration +8, Craft (trapmaking) +2, Listen +2, Search +2, Spellcraft +7, Spot +2.

Feats: Alertness (as long as Tolarak is within arm's reach), Combat Casting, Enlarge Spell.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/7/4; Spell DC 12 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, mage hand, mending, prestidigitation, ray of frost, resistance*; 1—*mage armor, magic missile, shield*; 2—*web*.

Possessions: *Wand of polymorph* (5 charges), masterwork small dagger, two gold bracelets worth 10 gp each.

Tolarak, rat familiar: CR —; Tiny magical beast; HD effectively 4; hp 8; Init +2; Spd 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.; AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp –10; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d3–4, bite); SA deliver touch spells; SQ empathic link, improved evasion, low-light vision, scent, share spells; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 2, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills: Balance +10, Climb +12, Hide +14, Move Silently +10, Swim +10.

Feats: Weapon Finesse.

Burogerk, male kobold Bbn3: CR 3; Small humanoid (reptilian); HD 3d12+3; hp 30; Init +2; Spd 40 ft; AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +3; Grp –1; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+1/19–20, *+1 small longsword*) or +6 ranged (1d6/19–20, small light crossbow); SA rage 1/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, illiteracy, light sensitivity, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 11, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Rage: hp 36; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Grp +1; Atk/Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+4/19–20, *+1 small longsword* wielded two-handed) or +6 ranged (1d6/19–20, small light crossbow); SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +4.

Skills: Bluff +3, Craft (trapmaking) +3, Hide +11, Listen +9, Move Silently +7, Search +2, Swim +4.

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes.

Possessions: *+1 small longsword*, small light crossbow, 20 bolts, masterwork chain shirt, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, 10 gp, 6 sp.

Gurken, male kobold Ftr6: CR 6; Small humanoid (reptilian), HD 6d10+12; hp 49; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +6; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk +11/+6 ranged (1d6+2/×3, *+1 small composite longbow* (+1 Strength) or +9/+4 melee (1d4+1/18–20, masterwork small scimitar); SQ darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills: Craft (trapmaking) +2, Climb +5, Search +1, Swim +6.

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Shot on the Run, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (longbow).

Possessions: *+1 small composite longbow* (+1 Strength), 20 arrows, masterwork small scimitar, *+1 chain shirt*, 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds*, *cloak of resistance* +1, 19 gp, 2 sp.

Jun-Olip, Male Kobold Sor2: CR 2; Small humanoid (reptilian); HD 2d4; hp 5; Init +3; Spd 30 ft; AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +1; Grp –6; Atk –1 melee (1d3–3/19–20, small dagger) or +5 ranged (1d6/19–20, small light crossbow); SA spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 4, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 15.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/5; save DC 12 + spell level): 0—*acid splash, detect magic, mage hand, ray of frost, resistance*; 1—*mage armor, magic missile*.

Skills: Concentration +5, Craft (trapmaking) +2, Listen +3, Search +2, Spellcraft +5, Spot +3.

Feats: Alertness (as long as Aoaki is in arm's reach), Combat Casting.

Possessions: Small light crossbow, 20 bolts, small dagger, *wand of magic missile* (12 charges), *wand of charm person* (11 charges), scroll of *fireball*, 2 sp.

Aoaki, raven familiar: CR —; Tiny magical beast; HD effectively 2; hp 2; Init +2; Spd 10 ft., fly 40 ft.; AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +1; Grp –12; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d2–5, claws); SQ empathic link, improved evasion, low-light vision, share spells; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills: Listen +3, Spot +5.

Feats: Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Common.

Krat, Female Kobold Sor2: CR 2; Small humanoid (reptilian); HD 2d4+5; hp 10; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +1; Grp –4; Atk +1 melee (1d3–1/19–20, small dagger) or +4 ranged (1d6/19–20, small light crossbow); SA spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 8, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 15.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/5; save DC 12 + spell level): 0—*acid splash, detect magic, mage hand, ray of frost, resistance*; 1—*mage armor, grease*.

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

Nervewrack Weapon Quality

A *nervewrack* weapon causes intense pain to lance through the target's body on a successful critical hit. A creature that suffers damage from a critical hit with a *nervewrack* weapon suffers a –2 penalty to his Armor Class, attack rolls, weapon damage rolls, and Reflex saves. The victim's speed is halved, and he must make a successful Concentration check (DC 15) to cast spells. This condition persists for 1d4 rounds.

Moderate necromancy; CL 9th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *symbol of pain*; Price +1 bonus.

Ring of Status

Rings of status come in pairs. The wearer of a *ring of status* can mentally monitor the relative position and general condition of the person who wears the matching ring, as the *status* spell.

Faint divination; CL 3rd; Forge Ring, *status*; Price 24,000 gp (for a pair).

Skills: Concentration +6, Craft (trapmaking) +2, Listen +2, Search +1, Spot +2.

Feats: Alertness (as long as Gamog is in arm's reach), Lightning Reflexes.

Possessions: Small light crossbow, 20 bolts, small dagger, *wand of magic missile* (6 charges), *wand of shocking grasp* (33 charges), scroll of *lightning bolt*, 2 sp.

Gamog, toad familiar: CR —; Diminutive magical beast; HD effectively 2; hp 5; Init +1; Spd 5 ft.; AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp –16; Atk/Full Atk —; SQ amphibious, empathic link, improved evasion, low-light vision, share spells; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 6.

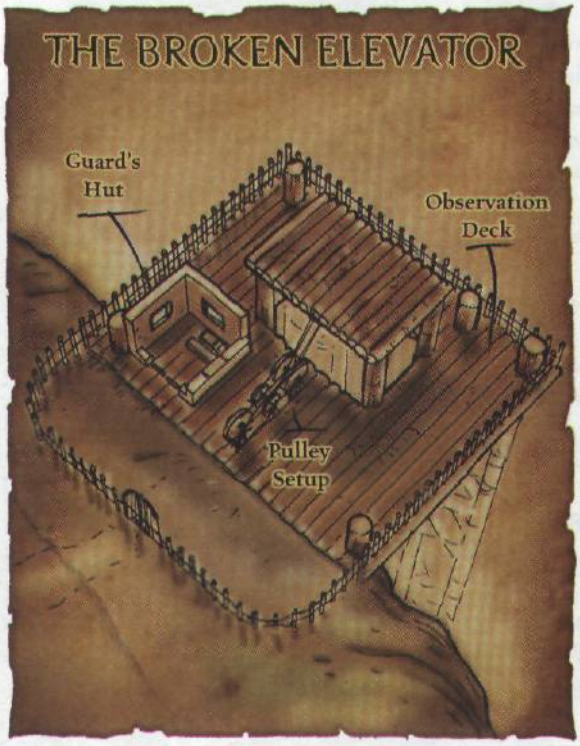
Skills: Hide +21, Listen +4, Spot +4.

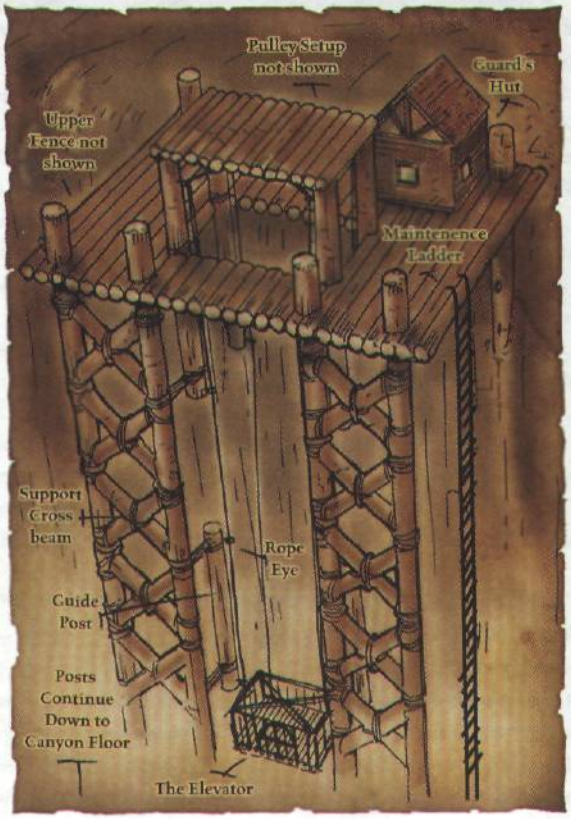
Feats: Alertness.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS IN EHLONNA'S SCAR

While Ehlonna's Scar is a relatively isolated area, it is rife with monstrous activity. Between each keyed encounter in the Scar, roll d% to determine if the characters come across some sort of encounter. If an encounter occurs but the PCs flee or otherwise avoid the encounter, it delays Maliss by 10 minutes.

D%	EL	Encounter
01–55	0	No encounter.
56–65	3	Assassin Vine: hp 30 (*Monster Manual* 20)
66–70	5	10 Stirges: hp 5 each; (*Monster Manual* 236)
71–75	7	Rock Slide: (*Dungeon Master's Guide* 90)
76–80	3	Giant Wasp: hp 32; (*Monster Manual* 285)
81–85	5	2 Formian Warriors: hp 22 each; (*Monster Manual* 109); These formians are part of a scout group exploring the Scar as a potential hive site.
86–90	3	Giant Eagle: hp 29; (*Monster Manual* 102); The giant eagle avoids the arrowhawk nest (area 2). If you roll this encounter near area 2, reroll the result. The eagle's initial attitude toward the PCs is indifferent. If it can be adjusted to helpful it agrees to ambush Maliss when it sees the yuan-ti. This creates a 10-minute delay for the would-be assassin.
91–93	7	Ethereal Filcher: hp 99; This is the Large ethereal filcher from area 7; it tries to steal something from a PC and flees to its lair.
94–95	5	Gibbering Mouther: hp 30; (*Monster Manual* 126)
96–97	5	2 Cockatrices (2): hp 27 each; (*Monster Manual* 37)
98–99	7	Dragonne: hp 76; (*Monster Manual* 89)
00	6	3 Merchants (Exp2) and 5 guards (Ftr2): These merchants decided to cut time on their journey to Highfolk by taking the Scar, and are having a rough time of it. They tell the PCs that they've lost two of their guards to a previous encounter, and offer them a reward of 500 gp if the PCs agree to escort them to Highfolk safely. This encounter occurs only once.





INTO THE SCAR

Ehlonna's Scar is approximately 40 miles long, but it rarely reaches a width of more than 60 feet. The canyon is a deep, "V"-shaped rift created by springtime runoff from the Yatil Mountains. The canyon walls are remarkably steep and fairly difficult to climb (Climb check DC 15). The canyon itself averages about 225 feet deep at the western end and 350 feet deep at the eastern end; the terrain surrounding the rift is rugged and grueling to traverse.

Inside the canyon, the temperature is much cooler and lighting is fairly shadowy. Creatures with light sensitivity (such as Maliss' kobolds) suffer no penalties from sunlight. A cold stream of water runs the length of the rift, eventually emptying into the underground Skuttlerun River. The floor of the Scar is strewn with rocks and small boulders and an occasional patch of scrub brush that struggles to stay alive in the minimal sunlight. At several points along the scar, geysers and hot springs provide additional dangers.

This adventure is assumed to take place in the summer. If you set this adventure during the spring, the stream is 10 feet wide. The geyser pools in areas **3** and **5** are submerged, but still release their steam blasts at their regular intervals. During the winter, the rift walls are icy and wet, increasing the Climb check to a DC of 20. The geyser pools are not iced over, thanks to their higher temperatures.

OBSTACLES IN THE SCAR

Notable among the obstacles of the Scar are the four 20-foot drops in the floor of the canyon; the locations of these four cliffs are indicated on the map of the Scar. In order to aid travelers, wooden ramps have been built along one cliff face at each of these locations so travelers on horses can easily descend to the tier below. The PCs can destroy these ramps as they encounter them to slow down Maliss' progress. The characters could also rig a ramp to collapse when a horse or carriage uses it; this requires a successful Disable Device check (DC 25). Maliss sends a horse-mounted kobold down each ramp first; the fall deals 2d6 points of damage to the horse and the kobold when the ramp collapses. A destroyed or collapsing ramp adds a 10-minute delay to the yuan-ti's group, and forces them to abandon their horses and chariot and continue the chase on foot. In this case, Maliss casts *longstrider* to keep up with the kobolds.

Wooden Ramp: Hardness 5; hp 90; Break DC 28.

At four locations along the length of the rift, the walls are pitted and eroded enough that it takes little work to generate a rockslide. These locations are noted by the "Rock Slide Site" designations on the map of the canyon. In order to notice a section of cliff that can be used to create a rockslide, a PC must make a Spot check (DC 28) as he passes one of these areas. The rockslide can be triggered with a successful Disable Device check (DC 25) or by inflicting 60 points of damage to the cliff wall. Once the rockslide begins, it creates a 30-foot-wide bury zone with a 40-foot slide zone on either side (DUNGEON MASTER'S *Guide* 90). A rockslide delays Maliss by 30 minutes.

Weak rock: 3-feet thick, Hardness 8; hp 60; Disable Device (DC 25).

1. THE BROKEN ELEVATOR (EL 6)

From Polvar:

Travel Distance: 10 miles

Travel Time (30 ft.): 4 hours, 20 minutes

Travel Time (60 ft.): 2 hours, 10 minutes

Short Cut: None

Delay: *Elevator unrepaired*: 30 minutes; *Elevator disabled*: 40 minutes; *Elevator destroyed*: 0 minutes, but Maliss and his kobold minions are forced to continue the chase on foot at a speed of 30 ft.

Attrition: None.

A small wooden fort sits perched on the edge of a deep chasm that splits the hills and runs into the Yatil Mountains to the east. A fence made of wood and reinforced with spiked bands of metal surrounds the fort. The fence wraps around to the back of the fort, where a large observation deck droops precariously over the canyon's edge. An intricate network of pulleys and ropes rises above the fort, and several thick ropes descend into the chasm.

This fort served as a watchpost in times past when Ehlonna's Scar saw much more foot traffic. The ropes and pulleys are an elevator that could once be used to raise and lower a large platform from the fort down into the Scar. This elevator works on a pulley-and-weight system, and was normally raised and lowered by a team of pack animals that were kept in the fenced-in area near the fort.

Inside the fort is a small countertop and space for bookkeeping. Through a door behind the counter is a single bed and small cabinet. The cabinet is empty, and no one's manned the fort or slept in the bed in many years. The entire building creaks and groans as the characters wander around in it; the structure is in a bad state of disrepair, although there's no real chance of it falling into the Scar without some significant "help."

Also on the deck, the characters discover the space where the open-air elevator car meets the deck. The car is stuck three-quarters of the way up the canyon wall.

Once the PCs step onto the loading deck read the following:

The loading deck is 70 feet long and 35 feet wide, and more than half this width hangs over the canyon. The deck is made of flat-topped logs fastened together with eight-inch-long bolts. The whole thing is supported by four massive wooden scaffoldings that rise up from the canyon floor to meet the deck.

While the deck isn't as badly damaged as the fort, it still shows signs of wear; standing water has rotted some of its planks. The thick ropes descend through a large opening in the platform down to a dangling elevator platform about 50 feet down. A gap in the deck reveals a stopped platform about one-quarter of the way down the canyon. A large iron lever protrudes from the deck next to this gap. A rickety ladder built into the scaffolding closest to the elevator extends down to the floor of Ehlonna's Scar.

A successful Knowledge (architecture and engineering) skill check (DC 13) or a Disable Device skill check (DC 20) reveals that the elevator has been disabled; its counterweights have been cut loose. These weights lie in a huge pile below the elevator. The elevator car itself is jammed in place.

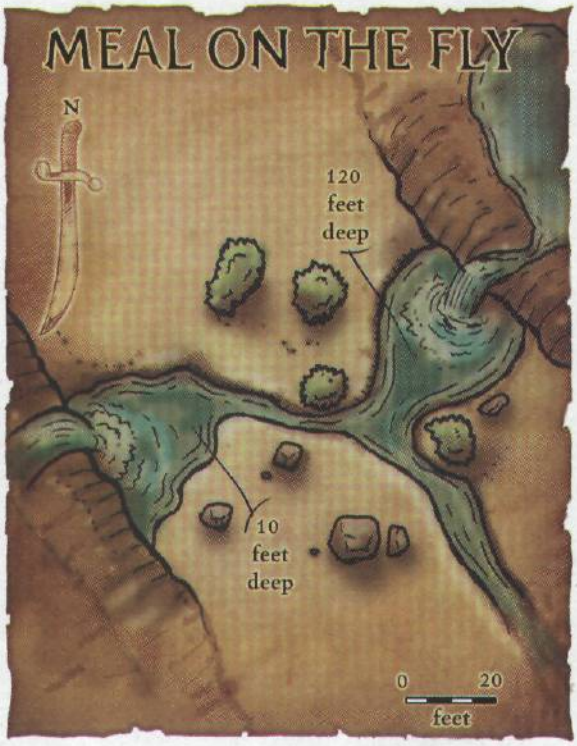
Repairing the elevator is actually a fairly quick task. Before it can function, the counterweights must be reattached; a character can attach the counterweights with a successful Use Rope check (DC 20) and 10 minutes of work. The other end of the ropes must then be untangled and retied with a second Use Rope check (DC 20) and 10 more minutes of work. Finally, the elevator car itself must then be pushed back into place with a successful Strength check (DC 24).

Once the elevator is repaired, the counterweights and the elevator platform itself must be re-aligned so that it can be raised or lowered. This requires a successful Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC 15) or a Disable Device check (DC 25). The elevator itself is normally raised by a team of draft horses pulling on ropes attached to the elevator or the counterweights; it rises or sinks at a rate of 5 ft. per round, and thus takes a about four and a half minutes to fully travel from the fort to the floor of the Scar, or vice-versa. The characters or creatures pulling on the ropes must be able to drag the weight of the elevator (5,000 lbs. plus the weight of the elevator's cargo) in order to move it; this normally requires two heavy horses or 3–4 light horses for the job. The brake lever in the observation deck must be disengaged for the elevator to move. If the brake lever is disengaged while nothing is holding the ropes and the elevator car is loaded, the elevator falls, and anything on the elevator (as well as the elevator itself) suffers falling damage according to the height of the fall.

When the elevator is operational, the car can carry 1,000 lbs. with no strain. Each additional 50 lbs. carries a cumulative 5% chance that the elevator's ropes snap or its pulleys give out. A successful Knowledge (engineering) check (DC 15) determines the elevator's maximum safe load weight.

The characters can use the elevator to slow Maliss considerably. A successful Disable Device check and 10 minutes of work renders the elevator useless until a new Disable Device check is made to repair it (these are opposed checks). Alternately, the characters could just destroy the elevator after they're done with it; doing so forces Maliss to abandon his chariot and horses and pursue the characters on foot.

Creatures: Maliss makes his first attempt on "Felicia" as the characters reach this elevator, most likely as they are trying to repair it to lower their horses. Although he probably won't catch up to them for at least an hour, he orders Alrughf to use his *wand of polymorph* on Gurken to transform the kobold fighter into a very young brass dragon. The polymorphed kobold then flies to intercept the characters; his vastly improved fly speed allows him to catch up to them with ease. Alrughf goes with Gurken and uses additional wand charges to maintain the *polymorphed* form. Since a charge from the wand



lasts for 7 minutes, he'll need to use all five remaining charges for this tactic. Gurken drops Alrughf off after the final charge is expended, just before he attacks the PCs at the elevator. Alrughf observes the battle from afar and reports the results (as well as any strengths and weaknesses the PCs display) back to Maliss.

Gurken, male kobold (in very young brass dragon form) Ftr6: CR 6; Small dragon (fire); HD 6d10+12; hp 49; Init +0; Spd 60 ft. burrow 30 ft., fly 120 ft. (average); AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +6; Grp +3; Atk +8 melee (1d6+1, bite); Full Atk +8 melee (1d6+1, bite) and +3 melee (1d4+1, 2 claws); AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills: Craft (trapmaking) +2, Climb +5, Search +1, Swim +6.

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Shot on the Run, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (longbow).

Tactics: Gurken focuses his attacks on "Felicia," doing his best to kill the character with his bite and claw attacks. Chances are that he won't be able to see through the disguise, but if he does he immediately breaks off combat and tries to return to Maliss to report the deception. He also tries to flee if brought below 15 hit points.

Fort Wall: 10 ft. tall, 1 ft. wide; Hardness 5; hp 120; Break DC 26; Climb DC 16. *Notes*: The spiked metal bands on the wall's top and sides make climbing over it a dangerous prospect. A climber must make a successful Reflex save (DC 15) each round spent climbing or suffer 2d4 points of damage from the spikes.

Wooden Support Posts: 1 ft wide; Hardness 5; hp 120; Break DC 26; Climb DC 21.

Elevator Car: Hardness 5; hp 120; Break DC 28.

Development: If the characters take too long repairing or exploring the elevator, it's likely that Maliss catches up to them. If this occurs, the yuan-ti does his best to kill "Felicia" using his ranged attacks. If the PCs try to escape by taking the elevator, he rides in and cuts the ropes in an attempt to cause the elevator to plummet to the ground below.

2. A MEAL ON THE FLY (EL 6)

From The Broken Elevator:

Travel Distance: 1 mile
Travel Time (30 ft.): 30 minutes
Travel Time (60 ft.): 15 minutes
Short Cut: DC 18, 5 minutes

Delay: *Encounter Active*: 20 minutes; *Encounter Cleared*: 10 minutes.
Attrition: *Encounter Active*: 1d4+2 wand charges or 2d6 damage to each NPC (1d6 to Maliss).

> Two tremendous waterfalls drain into the canyon from the mountains above, the water collecting into two churning pools that connect in the center, completely blocking the route. A stream flows to the east from the pool down the center of the rift floor.

The water between the pools is fairly shallow; characters on horseback can ford the water with ease. Maliss can cross the water in his chariot, but it takes him a bit longer (see Delay above).

Creatures: A group of three juvenile arrowhawks claim the cliff walls above these pools as their own. They readily attack anything they spy in the canyon below.

Juvenile Arrowhawks (3): hp 19, 17, 16; *Monster Manual* 19.

3. SHOCK TO THE SYSTEM (EL 6)

From A Meal on the Fly:

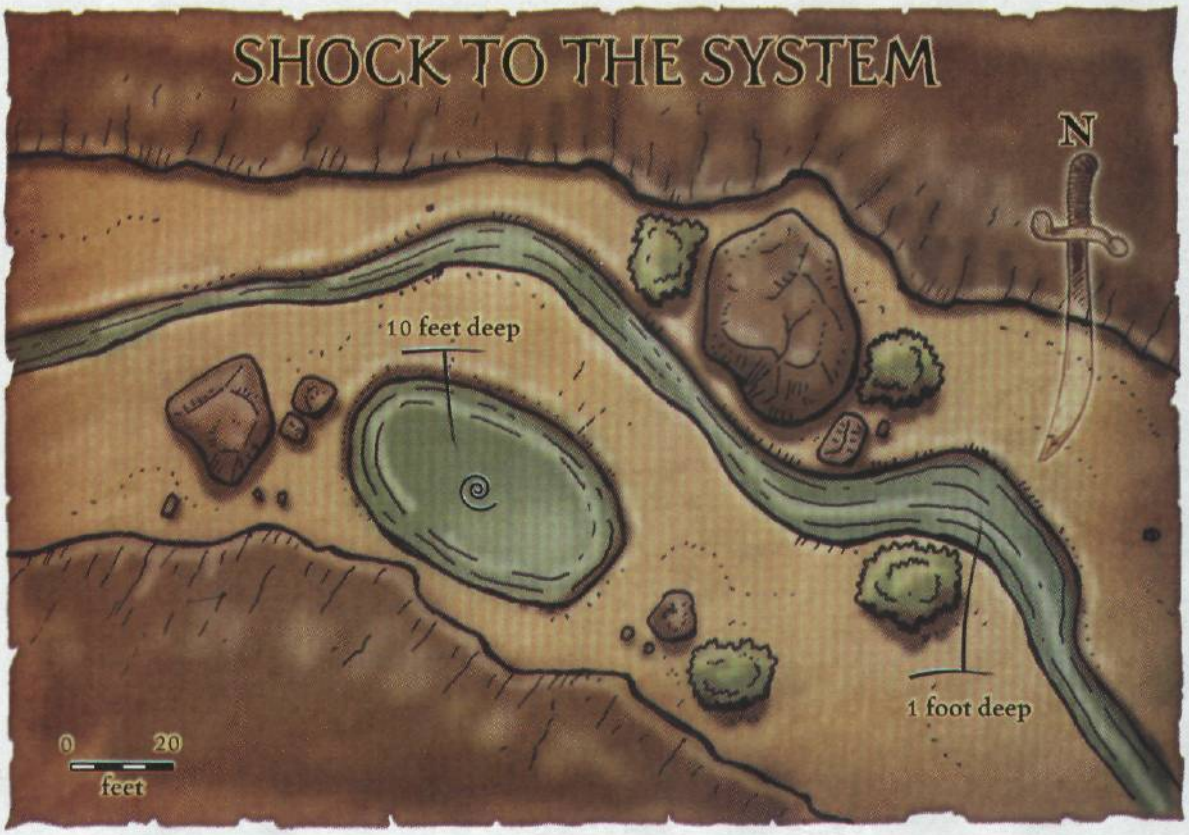
Travel Distance: 2 1/2 miles
Travel Time (30 ft.): 70 minutes
Travel Time (60 ft.): 35 minutes
Short Cut: DC 22, 10 minutes

Delay: *Encounter Active*: 10 minutes; *Encounter Cleared*: 0 minutes.
Attrition: *Encounter Active*: 1d4+2 wand charges or 2d6 damage to each NPC (1d6 to Maliss).

> A large bubbling pool of steaming water sits against the southern cliff wall here. To the northeast of the pool a large boulder protrudes from the rift floor.

The bubbling pool is one of the cooler pools in Ehlonna's Scar. A geyser in the pool erupts once every 15 hours, after which the water temperature peaks at 110°F.

Creatures: A colony of shocker lizards uses the shallows of the pool as nesting grounds. Lately, they've been preyed upon by the arrowhawks in area 2. The lizards prefer to feed on baboons, but aren't above ambushing PCs for a change of diet.



Shocker lizards (5): hp 15, 13, 12, 12, 11; *Monster Manual* 224.

Trap: If a character is close enough to the geyser when it goes off, he may suffer some damage from the blast of superheated water.

Geyser Blast: CR 2 hazard; erupts once every 15 hours; 30-ft.-high spray of boiling water (4d6 fire damage in a 15-ft. radius, Reflex save DC 15 half, no save if target is above geyser when in erupts).

Treasure: A successful Search check (DC 18) made in the pool uncovers a small scattering of loot from recent shocker lizard victims. This consists of 2 pp, 65 gp, 50 gp, and a +1 *greataxe*.

4. THE PALADIN'S TOMB (EL 4)

From Shock to the System:

Travel Distance: 2 1/2 miles

Travel Time (30 ft.): 70 minutes

Travel Time (60 ft.): 35 minutes

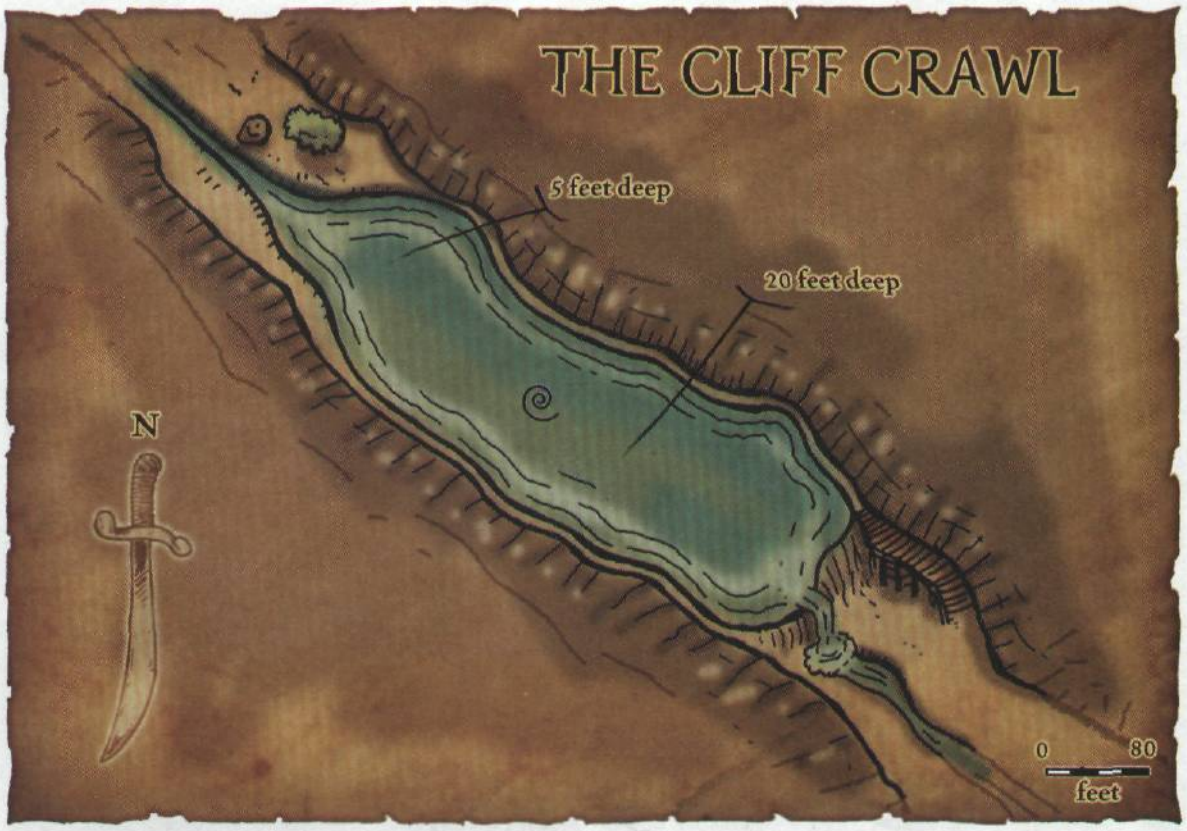
Short Cut: DC 20, 5 minutes

Delay: 0 minutes; Maliss and the kobolds pass by the cave without noticing it (but see Development below).

Attrition: None.

A huge mass of volcanic rock juts from the waters of the stream here, its sides polished smooth by the wind and water. A dense patch of shrubbery grows along the base of the cliff to the north.

Characters who investigate the shrubbery can find a narrow cave entrance at the base of the cliff with a successful Search check (DC 15). This entrance opens into a long but narrow



cavern. A natural vent in the far end of the cave opens to the sky above, making this an excellent place to camp for the night.

Creatures: Four large monstrous centipedes lurk in the depths of the cave. The centipedes live in the cave, but travel through the cracks and crevasses of the canyon to scavenge for food in the forest above.

Large Monstrous Centipedes (4): hp 13 each; *Monster Manual* 286.

Treasure: At the deepest end of the cavern lies the skeletal body of Erethian the Younger, an elf paladin Knight of the Hart. Lying near his body are his possessions: a suit of banded mail with lockable gauntlets, a helmet, a heavy steel shield with a coat of arms (a pair of antlers on a green background), three empty potion vials, and a prayerbook that bears some water damage.

A successful Knowledge (nobility and royalty) check (DC 20) recognizes the coat of arms on the paladin's shield as that of the Knights of the High Forest, a chivalric sect of elves based in the Highfolk region and affiliated with the Knights of the Hart influential in the nearby kingdoms of Veluna and Furyondy. (Substitute a similar order from your campaign if appropriate.)

The writing in the prayerbook is badly water-damaged, but a successful Decipher Script check (DC 25) can unravel the text on the last few pages. On these pages Erethian writes (in Elven) of how he was traveling west through the canyon and fell into a steaming pool of water after navigating a treacherous ledge overlooking the pool. The water burned him badly, and he mentions that he dropped his sword, an inheritance from his father, into the pool and was unable to retrieve it. He writes of how he managed to make it to this cavern before the pain of his burns forced him to stop. He apparently knew he was dying, for the last few fragments in the book beg anyone who finds his body to recover his sword and return it to Lord Narcoriel of the High Forest, the knight's benefactor, teacher, and sponsor into the prestigious Knights of the Hart. Unfortunately, Erethian the Younger perished from his wounds before he could indicate where his former mentor was located.

Development: This cave makes an excellent campsite, but if the players decide to rest here there's a good chance Maliss finds them. Even if he fails to track them to the cave entrance, he may notice hidden guards, smoke or glow from a campfire, or some other sign that the PCs stopped to rest. If he suspects the PCs are in the cave, he assumes the form of a tiny viper and slithers into the cave to scout it out. Note that as a Tiny creature, he gains a +8 bonus on Hide checks.

After scouting the cave, Maliss orders Alrughf to cast a *web* spell on the cave's entrance. He then orders his kobolds to surround the cave entrance, hiding behind trees or boulders before he has Jun-Olip and Krat read their scrolls and fire a *lightning bolt* and a *fireball* into the cave on the resting PCs. The group then lays siege to the cave, attacking anyone who emerges with ranged attacks and *magic missiles*.

5. THE CLIFF CRAWL (EL 3)

From The Paladin's Tomb:

Travel Distance: 2 1/2 miles

Travel Time (30 ft.): 70 minutes
Travel Time (60 ft.): 35 minutes
Short Cut: None
Delay: 30 minutes
Attrition: There's a 25% chance that one randomly selected kobold and mount fall into the lake and are slain.

A small lake of steaming water, its surface bubbling and churning, fills the canyon from side to side. The lake is about 140 feet long, and a large uprising of volcanic rock forms a natural dam at the far end. The water spills through a dip in the dam, forming a steaming waterfall at the far end.

Two 5-foot wide ledges, their surfaces damp with moisture and thick with algae and moss, skirt both sides of the lake at heights of up to 30 feet above the lake surface.

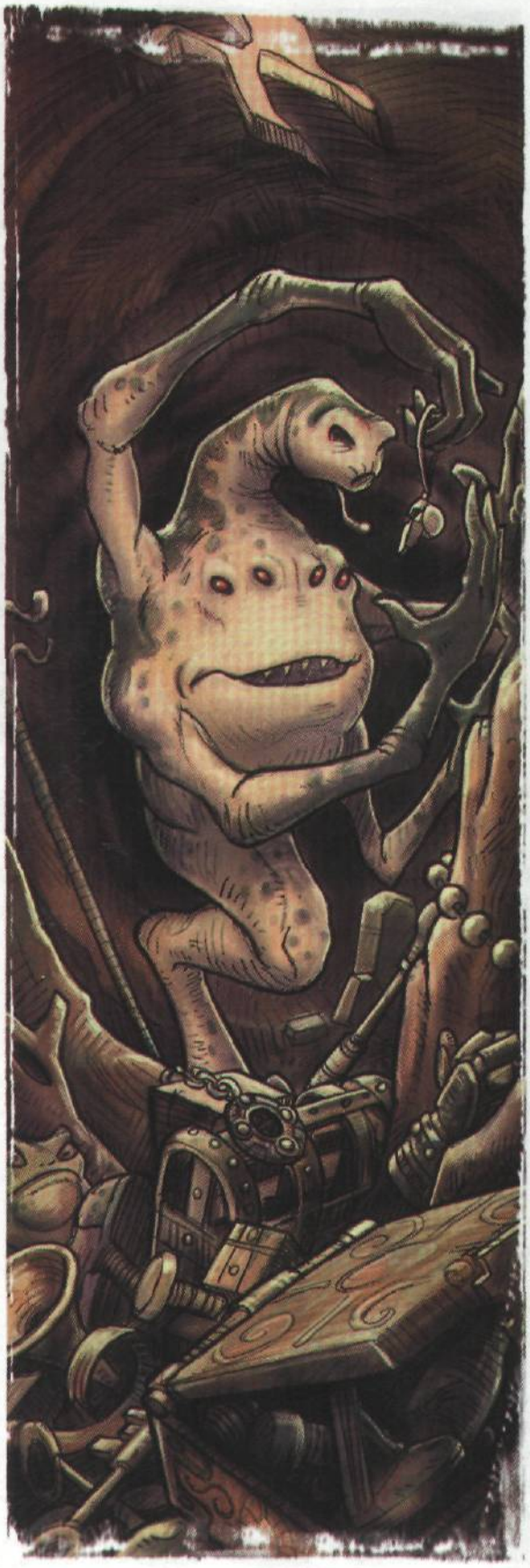
This boiling pool poses a terrible hazard. Normally, merchants take the northern ledge around the pool, leading any horses rather than riding them. The ledges are slippery and require a successful Balance check (DC 12) to navigate. Remember that making a Balance check assumes the character is moving half-speed; a character who moves full speed while trying to balance suffers a –5 penalty on his Balance check. A character riding a mount on a ledge must make a successful Ride check (DC 20) instead to navigate the ledge. A Huge or larger mount cannot move along the ledge unless it has a Climb speed. The cliff walls of this region are rather slippery and require a successful Climb check (DC 20) to navigate.

Failure of either check by 5 or more indicates a fall into the lake below. The initial fall into the lake only deals 1d3 points of nonlethal damage, but the water temperature poses a more significant threat. A character splashed with boiling water takes 1d6 points of fire damage. A character fully immersed in boiling water takes 6d6 points of fire damage per round.

Trap: A second hazard lurks in the depths of this pool; a large geyser in the pool's center erupts once every 10 minutes. A character who makes a successful Survival check (DC 20) upon observing the pool realizes that there's a good chance that at least one geyser is found in the pool. When the characters first arrive at this encounter, you should roll 1d10 to determine the number of minutes before the next eruption. Any characters on a ledge when the geyser erupts must immediately make a Balance check (DC 15) or be knocked into the boiling lake.

Geyser Blast: CR 3 hazard; erupts once every 10 minutes; 100 ft. high spray of boiling water (4d6 fire damage in a 60-ft. radius, Reflex save DC 15 for half damage, no save if target is above geyser when it erupts).

Treasure: Erethian the Younger (see area 4) dropped his sword when he fell into the water on an attempt to cross this lake several months ago. He was horribly burned but lived long enough to make his way back to area 4 before dying. He never did retrieve his sword. The sword now lies on the lake bed about 150 feet from the geyser; if the PCs know its approximate location from reading Erethian's prayerbook, they can find it with a



successful Search check (DC 20). The sword is a *+1 bane vs. chaotic outsiders longsword.*

Development: If Maliss and his gang catch up to the party here, they wait for the party to be about halfway across the lake before attacking them with long-range weapons.

If the PCs return Erethian's sword to Lord Narcoriel in the Vesve Forest east of Highfolk, the elderly elven knight noticeably darkens at the news. If there's a elf in the party, Narcoriel insists that character keep the sword as a reward. If not, he rewards the characters with 6,000 gp and his undying gratitude, which will come in handy if any members of the party are interested in a sponsorship into the Knights of the Hart.

6. A FORK IN THE SCAR

From The Cliff Crawl:

Travel Distance: 3 1/4 miles
Travel Time (30 ft.): 80 minutes
Travel Time (60 ft.): 40 minutes
Short Cut: DC 24, 10 minutes

Delay: None; Maliss knows the layout of the canyon and if he doesn't make a successful Survival check here to track the PCs he assumes they headed toward area 8 and continues to the northeast.

Attrition: None.

The canyon splits here, providing characters a choice as to which route to take. If the characters didn't think to ask Trend about the layout of Ehlonna's Scar, a successful Knowledge (geography) check (DC 15) indicates that character knows that the correct route toward Highfolk is to the northeast.

Although Maliss is naturally inclined to head to the northeast here, cunning PCs can lay a false trail for him to follow toward area 7.

7. THE FILCHER'S FORT (EL 7)

From A Fork in the Scar:

Travel Distance: 2 miles
Travel Time (30 ft.): 50 minutes
Travel Time (60 ft.): 25 minutes
Short Cut: None

Delay: *Encounter Active*: 20 minutes; *Encounter Cleared*; 10 minutes.
Attrition: *Encounter Active*: 2d6 wand charges or 4d6 damage to each NPC (2d6 damage to Maliss).

> Some time ago, a massive tree fell from a precarious perch on the cliff edge far above. The ruined tree has created a huge deadfall that now nearly blocks the Scar floor entirely.

Creature: A rather large ethereal filcher has lived in a large hollow deep in the deadfall for many years. The creature scours the surrounding region for trinkets and baubles to snatch, and has built up an impressive collection of loot here. The filcher often goes out into the canyon and its surroundings in search for goodies to snatch. The creature can be encountered elsewhere in the Scar as a wandering monster.

The filcher defends its lair with a fierce rage, drifting etherially out of the hollow inside the deadfall to attack anyone it sees or hears outside. The hollow inside the deadfall is fairly spacious, but the rubble is too densely packed for Medium or larger creatures to reach. A Small creature can squeeze through the gaps with a successful Escape Artist check (DC 30); the filcher, of course, enters and exits its lair ethereally.

Advanced Ethereal Filcher: CR 7; Large Aberration; HD 15d8+30; hp 99; Init +7; Speed 40 ft; AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +11; Grp +20; Atk/Full Atk +15 melee (1d8+7, bite); SQ darkvision 60 ft., detect magic, ethereal jaunt; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +8; Will +10; Str 20, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +1, Listen +7, Move Silently +5, Sleight of Hand +9, Spot +7.

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Mobility, Spring Attack, Stealthy.

Possessions: *Bracers of armor +2, pale blue rhomboid ioun stone.*

Treasure: Tucked into a pack of moss inside the log is the loot the filcher's gathered over the years: 68 pounds of worthless but shiny trinkets, a large topaz worth 700 gp, an amethyst worth 120 gp, a tiny sliver of jade worth 90 gp, and a *ring of counterspells* (with *flesh to stone* cast into it). Any objects the filcher has nabbed from the PCs earlier in this adventure can be found here as well.

8. BABOON TERRITORY (EL 5)

From A Fork in the Scar:

Travel Distance: 4 miles

Travel Time (30 ft.): 110 minutes

Travel Time (60 ft.): 55 minutes

Short Cut: DC 17, 15 minutes

Delay: *Encounter Active*: 30 minutes (Maliss takes extra time slaughtering the baboons due to his excessive distaste for the creatures); *Encounter Cleared*: 0 minutes.

Attrition: *Encounter Active*: 1d4 wand charges or 2d4 damage to each NPC (1d4 damage to Maliss).

> A scrawny tree protruding from a patch of dusty soil here has had its bark rubbed smooth about two feet up from the ground. Bits of fur are lodged in the bark, and bits of bone and dung are scattered about its base.

A successful Knowledge (nature) check identifies the worn tree, bones, and dung as the territorial markings of baboons.

Creatures: This stretch of canyon, culminating in area 9, is the territory of a large band of especially feral and territorial baboons. These creatures use the bottom of the canyon as their nesting grounds, clambering up the cliff walls to hunt in the surrounding mountains for food. The baboons are aggressive to any intruders in this region except the druid, Gyman Bristlebak, who lives at further down the canyon.

Not long after the characters enter this section of the Scar they come across a small group of six baboons. These creatures are somewhat tougher than the standard plains-dwelling variety, and have mastered the art of hurling rocks at enemies and prey. The baboons hoot and holler and writhe about as the PCs approach, and once they come within 30 feet they begin hurling rocks. If at least half their number are incapacitated, the remaining baboons flee to their geyser pool.

A total of 18 baboons live here, led by an alpha male of great size. When the characters arrive, roll 2d6 to see how many baboons are found here; the alpha male is always found at the geyser pool. The baboons defend their pool fiercely, but do not pursue anyone who tries to escape to the northeast or southwest. The baboons sleep at the geyser pool at night. In the day, they bathe in the pool or hunt for food in the mountains above.

Scar Baboons (18): CR 1/2; Medium animal; HD 2d8+2; hp 11 each; Init +2; Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d6+3, bite) or +3 ranged (1d4+2, thrown stone); SA throw stones; SQ low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +5; Will +1; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 4.

Throw Stone (Ex): Scar baboons can throw stones with amazing accuracy. Thrown stones have a range increment of 10 ft. and a maximum range of 50 ft. Scar baboons do not suffer range penalties with thrown stones.

Skills: Climb +10, Listen +3, Spot +4.

Feat: Point-Blank Shot.

Alpha Scar Baboon: CR 2; Medium animal; HD 3d8+9; hp 26; Init +3; Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +2; Grp +6; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+6, bite) or +3 ranged (1d4+4, thrown stone); SA throw stones; SQ low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +6; Will +1; Str 19, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Climb +12, Listen +3, Spot +4.

Feat: Point-Blank Shot.

Trap: In the center of the baboon territory a large bubbling pool of foul-smelling water sits at the base of a 20-foot cliff. This is the heart of the baboons' lands. The pool itself is about 30 feet wide and 70 feet long, and contains a single geyser that erupts once every 26 hours. The direct input of cool water by stream makes this pool much cooler than others along the canyon.

Geyser Blast: CR 2 hazard; erupts once every 26 hours; 30-ft.-high spray of boiling water (4d6 fire damage in a 15-ft. radius, Reflex save DC 15 half, no save if target is above geyser when in erupts)

9. THE DRUID'S HUT (EL 7)

From Baboon Territory:

Travel Distance: 3 miles

Travel Time (30 ft.): 70 minutes

Travel Time (60 ft.): 35 minutes

Short Cut: DC 22, 5 minutes

Delay: *Encounter Active*: 20 minutes; *Encounter Cleared*: 0 minutes.

Attrition: *Encounter Active*: 2d4 wand charges or 3d6 damage to each NPC (2d4 damage to Maliss).

An impressive wooden staircase seemingly grown out of living wood winds gracefully up the northwest cliff wall to its very peak nearly 320 feet above. There, a small wooden hut perches on the edge of the cliff.

The stairs are quite stable and can support the weight of several Large creatures at once.

Creatures: This hut is the dwelling of an elven druid named Gyman Bristlebak. Gyman has lived here with his animal companion (a mountain goat named Huron) for many years. Gyman spends most of his time caring for the wildlife in the canyon and in the wilderness area near the top of the canyon, exploring and patrolling the region. Nevertheless, he is at home when the PCs arrive in the area.

In general, Gyman has a sour personality, and his mood becomes even worse if he finds out that the PCs have slaughtered any of the natural inhabitants of the canyon, including the shocker lizards or the baboons. Despite his sour attitude, he agrees to help the PCs pass through the canyon, if only to get them out of his hair more efficiently. Presented with the note from Trend, he simply snorts derisively and uses a *wood shape* spell to craft a small rowboat out of a dead tree. He leaves the transport of the boat to the PCs, and expects them to move on immediately. This boat is somewhat larger than the standard-sized rowboat, and can accommodate 4 to 5 Medium characters. The boat weighs 200 lbs., however, and carrying it to the Skuttlerun may slow the PCs down enough for Maliss to catch up to them.

If the PCs are particularly crude or antagonistic, Gyman has no qualms about attacking them. In such a case, he sends Huron in to engage them in melee while he uses his spells to incapacitate and harm the characters.

Gyman Bristlebak, Male Elf Drd7: CR 7; Medium humanoid (elf), HD 7d8+14; hp 43; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +5; Grp +9; Atk +9 melee (1d6+4/18–20, scimitar) or +9 (1d4+1 plus 1d6 electricity, +1 *shock sling*); SA spells, wild shape 3/day; SQ animal companion, elf traits, nature sense, resist nature's lure, trackless step, wild empathy +7, woodland stride; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 18, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 10.

Skills: Concentration +12, Handle Animal +10, Heal +13, Knowledge (nature) +12, Listen +5, Ride +5, Search +4, Spellcraft +12, Spot +5, Survival +13 (+15 in aboveground natural environments).

Feats: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Scribe Scroll, Self-Sufficient.

Druid Spells Prepared (6/5/4/3/1): 0—*create water, detect magic, flare, mending* (2), *virtue*; 1—*cure light wounds* (2), *entangle, magic fang, speak with animals*; 2—*barkskin, flaming sphere, spider climb, wood shape*; 3—*cure moderate wounds, neutralize poison, sleet storm*, 4—*scrying*.

Possessions: Scimitar, +1 *shock sling*, hide armor, scroll of *cure critical wounds*, two scrolls of *animal messenger* and *goodberry*, scroll of *endure elements*, scroll of *obscuring mist*, scroll of *cure light wounds*, scroll of *giant vermin*.

Huron, male mountain goat: CR —; Medium animal; HD 6d8; hp 30; Init +3; Speed 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk +5 melee (1d6+3, head butt); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+3, head butt) and –2 melee (1d4+1, 2 hooves); SQ devotion, evasion, link, low-light vision, share spells; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +7; Will +1; Str 16, Dex 19, Con 11, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 4.

Skills: Climb +15, Jump +8, Listen +5, Spot +5.

Feats: Alertness, Skill Focus (climb), Weapon Focus (head butt).

Tricks: Attack, Come, Defend, Down, Guard, Heel, Stay.

Development: Gyman's initial attitude is indifferent unless he knows the characters have slaughtered many of the Scar's indigenous creatures (shocker lizards and baboons in particular), in which case his attitude is unfriendly. If his attitude can be adjusted to helpful, he agrees to help the PCs delay Maliss if asked. He accomplishes this by throwing several *summoned nature's allies* at the yuan-ti's group; this increases Maliss' delay for this encounter to 40 minutes.

10. INTO THE SKUTTLERUN

From The Druid's Hut:

Travel Distance: 9 miles

Travel Time (30 ft.): 3 hours, 30 minutes

Travel Time (60 ft.): 7 hours

Short Cut: DC 22, 15 minutes

Delay: 10 minutes.

Attrition: None.

Ehlonna's Scar comes to an abrupt end. A 30-foot-wide opening at the base of the cliff wall allows the stream to cascade over a 20-foot-high drop off into a low, water-filled cave. A

wide wooden ramp runs down the side of one wall into the cave down to a floating pier below. Gentle currents roil in the water, and it empties into a respectable-looking river that leads down a tunnel going south.

This marks the start of the third leg of the chase; the Skuttlerun is no less dangerous than the Scar but poses an entirely new set of obstacles and trials. Normally, two or three rowboats are kept tied here for merchants to use, but no one's returned any of the boats to this landing for the past several months; the PCs (and Maliss behind them) must devise or provide their own way to navigate the river.

CHAPTER THREE: THE SKUTTLERUN

The 30-foot-wide river known as the Skuttlerun has a slow-moving current that gently moves down the underground tunnel. The passageway itself rises about 30 feet above the river into a deep crevasse at the ceiling, from which cold water drips. The sides of the cavern are damp with moisture and slippery-looking algae.

The itinerant shoreline consists of little more than damp piles of collected sediment and pebbles deposited along the walls by the river's flow, but for the most part the water runs right up to the passageway's edges.

The Skuttlerun is a slow-moving underground river fed by runoff from the Yatil Mountains. Numerous curves and side passages branch off the main river, but the course of the Skuttlerun leads inexorably toward the lake. Upriver, the cavern roof dips down to the level of the river's surface, but between area 10 and Highfolk the ceiling height above the river's surface averages at 30 feet.

The waters of the Skuttlerun are 15 feet deep on average. Eventually, the river opens up into a huge, dark, underground lake. This lake, which is nearly a mile across, is located deep under Highfolk and serves as a sort of hidden port for the city, allowing shady merchants and other undesirable elements to use the Ehlonna's Scar/Skuttlerun route to enter the city without being observed. The Highfolk government knows of this underground entrance, but they generally turn a blind eye to it as long as the local thieves' guilds continue to bribe the right politicians.

There are numerous options available for the characters in navigating the Skuttlerun. If they secured Gyman's aid, they can use the large rowboat he created for them. This rowboat is fairly ungainly, and moves at 1 mile per hour as long as it is rowed or poled. If they convert the floating platform from area 10 into a raft (this requires 20 minutes of work), it moves at only 1/2 a mile per hour. The Skuttlerun's current flows at 1 mile per

hour; add this rate to the speed of a raft or rowboat being poled or rowed downriver. The PCs probably lack the endurance or skill to swim the entire length without magic. Spells like *polymorph, water walk,* and *spider climb* can provide alternate methods of navigating the river. There aren't any beaches large enough to serve as campsites until the underground lake, unfortunately, so characters who use such magic to traverse the river may find themselves stranded in the river.

Maliss hopes to catch up to "Felicia" before she reaches the Skuttlerun, but if the PCs make it to the river he decides to follow them alone. His natural swim speed allows him to cover 1-1/2 miles per hour, or 3-1/2 miles with the aid of the current; fast enough to possibly catch up to the PCs if they're forced to take a boat or raft down the river. If he catches up to them, he bides his time and attacks when they are distracted (perhaps with another encounter). If the PCs reach area **15**, he coordinates his attack on them with the smugglers.

Although there aren't many physical obstacles to slow down the PCs or Maliss along the Skuttlerun's length, numerous dangerous creatures take advantage of the relatively high traffic along the river's length. Most of these denizens are wandering monsters, but a few have established lairs along the Skuttlerun.

11. AN UNEXPECTED MERCHANT (EL 5)

From Into the Skuttlerun:

Travel Distance: 7 1/4 miles
Travel Time (drifting): 3 hours, 40 minutes
Travel Time (raft): 2 hours, 55 minutes
Travel Time (rowboat): 2 hours, 25 minutes
Travel Time (Maliss swimming): 2 hours, 5 minutes
Short Cut: None.

Delay: 10 minutes.

Attrition: 1d3 wand charges or 2d6 damage to Maliss.

Creatures: As the PCs move down the river, a water mephit swims up to greet them. This loquacious water mephit is named Gawdum, and he doesn't waste any time before asking if the PCs would like to purchase two fine pieces of equipment from him. The first is a beautifully made masterwork composite longbow (+3 Str). The bow is black with a black leather grip. Gawdum wants 1,000 gp for it. The other is a suit of *+1 half-plate* that he'll sell for 2,000 gp. These prices are slightly inflated; if the PCs can adjust his initial attitude from friendly to helpful, he agrees to sell them the items at regular price (700 gp for the longbow and 1,750 gp for the armor).

Gawdum keeps both of these objects hidden in a nearby underwater cave. If the PCs wish to purchase either item, he tells them to "wait here" for a moment while he fetches his wares. It takes the mephit 10 minutes to return with the goods, unfortunately, but he's honest with the PCs and the items he sells are legitimate.

If the PCs try to double-cross him, Gawdum calls his pet juvenile tojanida to help defend him. In combat, he giggles and titters and makes obnoxious comments; for example, if he casts *stinking cloud* he blames it on "something I ate yesterday."

- **Gawdum, Water Mephit**: hp 22; *Monster Manual* 185.
- **Juvenile Tojanida**: hp 19; *Monster Manual* 244.

Development: The PCs can hire Gawdum to help them by delaying Maliss for the low price of 2,500 gp (1,800 gp if his attitude is helpful). Gawdum doesn't directly attack the yuan-ti, but his diversionary tactics delay Maliss by 30 minutes.

If the PCs annoy Gawdum and he survives, he joins up with Maliss in hopes of avenging the insult.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS ON THE SKUTTLERUN

Consult this random encounter chart every 4 hours while the PCs are in the underground river or lake.

D%	EL	ENCOUNTER
01–65	—	No encounter.
66–74	2	Flash flood: From somewhere deeper in the Underdark, a flood of water surges down the Skuttlerun from upriver. Characters on a vessel must make a successful Reflex save (DC 15) or get swept overboard.
75–80	5	Darkmantles (6): hp 6 each; *Monster Manual* 38.
81–85	6	Reekmurk: hp 72; *Fiend Folio* 18 (if you don't have access to this book, you can replace this monster with an aquatic version of the ochre jelly).
86–90	5	Bat Swarm (3): hp 13 each; *Monster Manual* 237.
91–95	5	Monstrous Spider: hp 52; *Monster Manual* 289.
96–00	6	Smugglers: use the statistics for the smugglers encountered in area **15**, although these smugglers have no ties to Vasilis.

12. THE FALLS

From An Unexpected Merchant:

Travel Distance: 20 miles
Travel Time (drifting): 10 hours
Travel Time (raft): 8 hours
Travel Time (rowboat): 6 hours, 40 minutes
Travel Time (Maliss swimming): 5 hours, 45 minutes
Short Cut: None.

Delay: None.

Attrition: None.

A low rumbling sound echoes through the tunnel, and the current seems to be picking up speed. The river tunnel takes a sharp turn to the south ahead. A small beach with a short wooden pier sits just ahead of this turn against the southern bank; two small rowboats are tied to the pier. The beach runs along the north side of the river around the corner.

This small beach landing represents the end of the river journey, although the PCs might not immediately realize it. Just around the corner, the current picks up considerable speed and turns into a 30-foot-high waterfall that plummets anything still floating on its surface into the inky waters of the lake below. A successful Knowledge (dungeoneering) or Profession (sailor) check (DC 15) allows a character to realize in advance that a waterfall is likely located around the corner. If a character goes around the bend, he must make a successful Swim check (DC 15) to swim against the current, otherwise he is swept over the waterfall. Likewise, a character guiding a water vehicle must make a successful Profession (sailor) check (DC 15) or his boat is swept over the waterfall.

A character swept over the waterfall suffers 3d6 points of nonlethal damage; a successful Reflex save (DC 15) halves this damage. A vessel swept over the waterfall is in much more danger, and must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) as an unattended object to avoid being smashed to pieces by the fall. If this save is successful, the vessel must immediately make a Reflex save (DC 15) to avoid sinking into the lake. If the vessel's pilot makes a successful Profession (sailor) check (DC 15) upon going over the waterfall, he may substitute his own saving throws for the vessel's unattended saving throws.

A narrow beach leads from the landing up to the edge of the waterfall. A flight of stairs is carved into the rock wall immediately south of the waterfall here. They are quite slippery from algae and spray from the waterfall. A successful Balance check (DC 12) is required to navigate the stone stairs. Below, the stairs end at a rocky beach. This beach averages 20 feet wide and runs the entire length of the underground lake south to area 15.

At this point, Maliss realizes that his best bet is to get ahead of the characters to ambush them at the Smuggler's Cove (area 15). He ceases to track the PCs and instead swims directly across the lake to the cove; it takes him 2 hours to swim to area 15. Once he arrives at the cove, he quickly takes charge of Vasilis' agents he finds there.

13. A NEW BOAT (EL 7)

From The Falls:

Travel Distance: 2 miles

Travel Time (30 ft.): 40 minutes

> A small empty rowboat sits on the beach here. It looks to be in fairly good condition.

Creature: This rowboat is in fact a Huge mimic that has learned that appearing as a boat at the edge of a large waterway is an effective way to lure victims into contact with it. It has even scattered its treasure in the bottom of its boat form to further attract prey. It exudes its adhesive as soon as someone climbs into it or tries to push it offshore, and then begins attacking any caught victims immediately.

Advanced Mimic: CR 7; Huge aberration (shapechanger); HD 11d8+55; hp 104; Spd 10 ft.; AC 16, touch 8, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +8; Grp +24; Atk +17 melee (2d6+8, slam); Full Atk +17 melee (2d6+8, 2 slams); SA adhesive, crush 2d6+8; SQ darkvision 60 ft., immunity to acid, mimic shape; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 27, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +10, Disguise +22, Listen +7, Spot +7, Swim +13.

Feats: Alertness, Athletic, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (slam).

Treasure: The mimic's treasure consists of 150 gp, an emerald worth 800 gp, a diamond worth 400 gp, and a jade worth 90 gp.

14. HARPY BEACH (EL 6)

From A New Boat:

Travel Distance: 2 miles

Travel Time (30 ft.): 40 minutes

> The beach here widens out, doubling in size and reaching nearly 40 feet from the cavern wall to the shore of the lake. Several reeking carcasses litter the beach; the dead creatures look like huge bats, but something seems a bit disturbing about their long, almost humanoid limbs.

Creatures: A flock of harpies recently moved onto this beach, but over the past several weeks smugglers from the cove to the south have been working to thin out their numbers and make this underground route to Highfolk safer for their allies. Only two harpies remain now, and they are eager for new prey. If the PCs pass this area in a boat, the harpies use their *wind fan* to try to capsize the boat.

Harpies (2): hp 28, 23; *Monster Manual* 151.

***Treasure**: In their nest, the harpies have stashed 320 gp and a black pearl worth 300 gp in a rotten backpack. The larger of the two harpies owns a wind fan.*

15. SMUGGLER'S COVE (EL 8 OR 11)

From Harpy Beach:

Travel Distance: 5 miles

Travel Time (30 ft.): 1 hour, 40 minutes

> The stony beach rises up to a large open area containing several small wooden shacks. A large wooden platform extends over the beach and forms a long pier out into the lake. At the far end of the cave several ladders and a large wooden cage sit under an opening in the cave roof above. Despite the buildings, the place is quiet and calm.

Smugglers, shady merchants, and other individuals who would rather not be seen entering the city of Highfolk via its gates use this small waterfront to enter the city. The place is normally quite busy, and is one of the more prosperous black

markets in the town. Dajoud Vasilis spared no expense to pay off the merchants, smugglers, and thieves of this cove for a few days so he could use the area as an ambush in case Maliss was unable to slay "Felicia" before she can escape into the city above. The merchants and smugglers have complied with Vasilis' wishes, and have relocated their wares elsewhere until the ambush is over.

The ladders opposite lead upward to the interior of a large warehouse in Highfolk that is owned by a powerful and shady merchant. The wooden cage is an elevator, similar to the one located in area 1, but in a much better state of repair. It is used to transport goods into the city above.

Creatures: Six of Vasilis' thugs lurk in the buildings overlooking the pier. They wait for "Felicia" and her escort to pass through their midst, presumably on their way to the ladders leading up into Highfolk, before they open fire with their crossbows. The thugs concentrate their fire on "Felicia"; they only have a vague description of her, so they receive no bonuses on their Spot checks to see through her disguise. Any thugs who see through the disguise hold their initial actions. If they all notice the disguise they let the characters pass unmolested, and report the development to Vasilis as soon as possible.

Vasilis Thugs, Male and Female Human Ftr2 (6): CR 2; Medium humanoids (human); HD 2d10+4; hp 19 each; Init +1; Spd 20 ft; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d8+2, masterwork longsword) or +4 ranged (1d8/19–20, masterwork light crossbow); AL CN; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Intimidate +5, Jump –2, Ride +6, Spot +0.

Feats: Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Power Attack, Toughness.

Possessions: Masterwork longsword, masterwork light crossbow, 10 bolts, scale mail, two *potions of cure moderate wounds*, 2 gp, 4 sp.

Development: If Maliss manages to reach this area before the PCs, the thugs recognize him and make themselves known to the yuan-ti. Maliss, somewhat offended that Vasilis didn't trust him enough to not use "backup assassins," swallows his pride and joins the thugs in the ambush. He hides in the hut closest to the exit leading up into the city. If he finally realizes that the PCs have misled him at this point, his rage takes over and he tries to kill them all for making a fool of him.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If Maliss discovers the ruse involving the disguised "Felicia" too early, he notifies Vasilis the next time he contacts the yuan-ti via a *sending* spell. Vasilis does this twice a day; once at dawn and once at dusk. If notified of the deception, Vasilis scrys on Trend and Felicia to locate them, then hires a second assassin to intercept them before Felicia gets to Highfolk. Once Felicia reaches Falwur (three days after the adventure

begins), she is safe from Vasilis' rage since he dares not incite the direct wrath of the Brisbane family. Likewise, if the PCs kill or permanently incapacitate Maliss before Felicia becomes married, Vasilis knows immediately, thanks to the *ring of status* he forced the yuan-ti to wear after his failure to assassinate Trend. He scrys on Trend and sends a new assassin after Felicia immediately.

Assuming the PCs know of Felicia's whereabouts, or can divine her location with magic, they could try to prevent the assassination by rushing to the wedding in Falwur. Details of this frantic adventure are left to your imagination.

If they manage to maintain the deception long enough for Felicia to reach Falwur, Trend has an ally use a *sending* spell to let one of the PCs know that Felicia is safe and that if they remain in Highfolk for a few days he'll meet them and give them their reward then. He's true to his word, and arrives in Highfolk in a few days and promptly rewards them. The Brisbane family is also thankful for the service the PCs have provided, and they allow them to reside in the family villa in Highfolk for the duration of their stay in town.

As for Vasilis...once the bond between Trend and Brisbane is forged, he finds himself on the defensive. He ceases his violence against Trend for fear of reprisal from the Brisbanes, while at the same time Trend is able to lower his costs and increase his security, further overcoming Vasilis' influence in Polvar.

The characters' actions may also have impressed the Brisbanes enough that they might approach them with further offers of employment. The PCs could be asked by Brisbane and Trend to supervise construction of a more stable and safe trading route from Polvar to Highfolk through Ehlonna's Scar and the Skuttlerun. As the construction starts, Dajoud Vasilis secretly hires a group of monstrous raiders to stir up trouble in the Scar.

Finally, if Maliss or any of his cohorts live through the adventure, they doubtless harbor strong feelings of resentment toward the PCs, and can prove to be effective recurring villains in the campaign. Ω

"Racing the Snake" is John Simcoe's first adventure for Dungeon. *When not working feverishly on his own D&D campaign, he's stuck at his regular job as a copy editor at a Pennsylvania newspaper.*

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

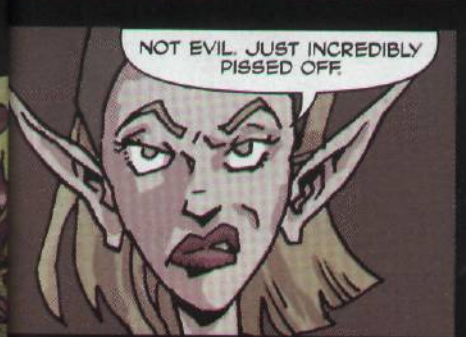
"Racing the Snake" is designed for a group of four 6th-level PCs, but with a little work it can be adapted for use by 4th–5th or 7th–8th-level characters.

4th- and 5th-level PCs: Run the adventure as written, but limit the number of creatures per encounter and reduce the various skill checks required to move through the Scar and the Scuttlerun by 2. Convert Maliss into a 3rd-level ranger and remove Burogerk, Jun-Olip, and Krat altogether. The remaining kobolds should attack the party separately. Most importantly, you should give the PCs a longer head start and allow them more chances to recover as they go. The ethereal filcher should be removed from the adventure entirely, and reduce the number of large groups of monsters (such as the shocker lizards, the baboons, and the various thugs) by 2–3.

7th- to 10th-level PCs: Run the adventure as written, but add one or two levels to all of Maliss' kobolds and to all of Vasilis' thugs; Maliss himself should gain one or two assassin levels (you'll need to readjust his skills slightly to meet the requirements for the assassin prestige class). Maliss himself should start out only 20 minutes or so behind the characters. The shocker lizards should be changed into cockatrices, the baboons into apes, and the harpies into cloakers or manticores. Finally, you should either remove Gyman Bristlebak from the adventure or change his alignment to neutral evil and have him be another enemy the characters face in the Scar. If you choose to make Gyman an enemy, you should increase his level by one or two.

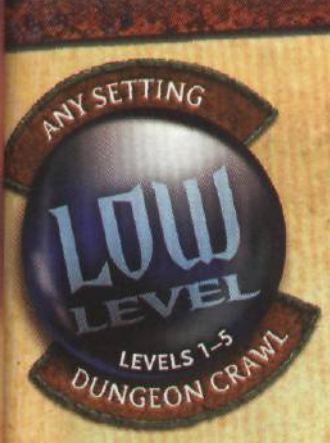
Remember that changing Encounter Levels or NPC class levels should raise or lower the amount of treasure in the adventure. Chapter 3 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* provides guidance for raising and lowering treasure amounts.

MANGLECRAMPS, NO! THE ULOLOK IS A THREAT TO ALL OF US! THERE'S NO CONTROLLING IT!
YEEARGH!
GRUNCH GRUNCH
}HUFF HUFF{
DOWNER! DON'T MAKE ME PARALYZE YOU!
eech.
rattle rattle
THE }HRRR{ ONLY SALVE THAT WILL SOOTHE THESE WOUNDS IS YOUR TREACHEROUS BLOOD }GAF GAF{
"UT DA HUCK?"
wuurgh?
BLORCH
KHOOM



Story and art by Kyle Stanley Hunter. Lettering by Sean Glenn. A Super Unicorn production. www.superunicorn.com

NEXT: THE ULOLOK SECURED!



THE STINK

BY MONTE LIN

ARTWORK BY UDON ENTERTAINMENT
CARTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTOPHER WEST

"The Stink" is a D&D adventure designed for four 4th-level characters, although it can be adapted for lower-level or higher-level characters. The adventure takes place primarily in a filthy, disease-ridden dungeon, so characters who can cast *lesser restoration* or are immune to disease should prove helpful. Someone with the ability to speak Aquan allows many of the adventure's encounters to be resolved diplomatically rather than violently, and characters with strong Swim skills should prove useful in the dungeon's many flooded areas.

You can place the city of Suncliff in any coastal region; feel free to change the name of the city to match one in your campaign.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Eons ago, a tribe of locathah fell under the terrible festering influence of Incabulos, god of disease and disaster. The Black Rider awed this lost tribe with the power of the flood, the hurricane, and the tsunami. Such disasters appealed to the locathah, since they all so potently ruined and overwhelmed the lands above with the power of the sea. Why settle for only the sea, they wondered, when they could destroy the land as well?

The tainted tribe multiplied and prospered. They kidnapped Eadro-worshiping locathah from nearby tribes, using their bodies to test out new diseases and tortures. These tribes were forced to band together for mutual protection against Incabulos' brood, and in an attempt to organize a defense formed a tribal council. The tainted tribe continued to grow in power despite this, until Incabulos took them to his domain to serve in his oceans as his favored minions. The evil of his realm transformed them into fiendish creatures, and they continue to serve the Black Rider to this day. Occasionally, members of the tainted tribe invade the Material Plane to continue their diabolical disease and breeding experiments on their more peaceful kin.

The Deep Mother is the leader of one of these invader groups. She led her followers through a portal into the deep sea of the Material Plane at the suggestion of one of Incabulos' demonic agents, for the city of Suncliff had come to the Black Rider's attention as a prime location to harvest strange new diseases. In particular, an entire district of the rapidly growing city had been walled off, converted into a horrid dumping ground for the rest of the city. Left alone and ignored as best as possible, this district, known simply as the "Stink" to locals, has slowly been breeding terrible and unique diseases and pestilence deep inside of it...diseases potent enough for Incabulos to smell all the way from his festering realm in the Outer Planes.

The Deep Mother's journey to Suncliff wasn't without peril, and she lost many of her minions to denizens of the sea before she reached the city. The fiendish locathah quickly settled into the filthy caverns below the Stink, and the Deep Mother began to send small raiding parties out into the sea to steal locathah eggs from local tribes. The eggs, once returned to the Stink, could then be tainted with cruelty and evil so that the hatchlings would be born fiendish locathah. Eventually, the Deep Mother hopes to replenish her forces with these full-grown fiendish locathah and return to Incabulos' realm with the diseases collected from the depths of the Stink.

The locathah tribes know that the fiendish locathah are based somewhere in Suncliff, and as a result they believe that the citizens of Suncliff are somehow involved in the raids. The most recent raid was the final straw to the local locathah, and they are preparing to send in several groups of skirmishers to fight back against their perceived enemies. The citizens of Suncliff are blissfully unaware of the approaching clash between the locathah tribes. Even if they did know, unfortunately, the city government (which is overtaxed and tied up in a bureaucratic mess) would not be able to muster a proper defense against the overwhelming numbers of locathah. When the

INCABULOS, THE BLACK RIDER

Incabulos (in-CAB-yoo-lohs) is a neutral evil god of plagues, sickness, famine, nightmares, drought, and disasters. He is depicted as a deformed man with skeletal hands, and wears a black robe lined with orange and green. He is often shown riding a huge nightmare and accompanied by various types of hags. His symbol is a stylized eye that symbolizes possession. His clerics are secretive and paranoid, and reveal themselves for what they are only in times of great despair when they can fan the emotions of the suffering. Torture, spreading disease, and encouraging blight are the foundations of their appetites, and they often travel to distant lands to collect exotic diseases. The Black Rider's favored weapon is the quarterstaff, and he grants the domains of Death, Destruction, and Evil to his clerics.

You can substitute a similarly foul deity from your campaign for Incabulos, but if you do, make sure that you adjust the granted domains for the clerics found in this adventure appropriately.

tribes rise through the city sewers, the citizens of Suncliff may well be doomed.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Something in the Stink has been causing trouble for Suncliff. Workers and guards sent into the Stink have been disappearing. Worse, ghouls and ghasts are becoming a real problem to workers in the Stink, and a few of the undead have actually managed to wander out of the Stink and into nearby districts. The PCs are hired by a cleaning engineer to search the Stink, find out and stop what's been causing the disappearances, and rescue any workers or guards who may yet survive in the reeking mess.

Several false trails trick the heroes into thinking the culprits could be undead, otyughs, or even an escaped convict. They find an extensive network of caverns and chambers in and below the Stink, and upon exploring them encounter a band of locathah scouts. From them, the PCs learn that the locathah have been having problems of their own, and that the locathah tribes blame the citizens of Suncliff. The locathah agree to postpone their assault on Suncliff for a short time if the PCs agree to continue into the depths of the Stink to stop the "devil-kin" from raiding the locathah tribes.

The PCs press deeper and eventually find the stronghold of the fiendish locathahs led by the Deep Mother. To save Suncliff, both from an attack from the sea by the enraged locathahs and from an unholy plague the Deep Mother has been cultivating, the heroes must defeat the fiendish locathahs that lurk in the depths of the Stink.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The PCs are in the overpopulated city of Suncliff. They could be visiting the city for some reason, or it could even be their home town. Even if this is the characters' first visit to Suncliff, it won't be long before they notice the Stink. Rumors about workers and guards disappearing in the Stink and undead infesting the wretched mess are on everyone's tongues, and to put it bluntly, it isn't easy to ignore the smell. The adventure itself begins as the characters approach the walls surrounding the Stink. If you need a reason to lure the PCs toward the Stink, you can use one of the following hooks:

- *Missing Friend:* Perhaps a close friend of one of the PCs is one of the workers or guards who's gone missing in the Stink. The city government is too disorganized to quickly organize a rescue attempt, so it may be up to the PCs to save the missing friend.
- *Accidental Garbage:* An associate or patron of one of the PCs approaches the group with an embarrassing problem; it seems that he accidentally threw away a valuable family heirloom a couple of days ago and he needs someone to go into the Stink and look for it.

Other reasons to get the PCs to approach the Stink can be devised; in any case, the adventure begins as they witness the aftermath of a ghoul attack at the edge of the Stinkwall.

SUNCLIFF, THE JEWEL OF THE SEA

Suncliff is an ancient city, located at the hub of a prime shipping route. Traditionally a place for merchants, aristocrats, nobles, artists, and craftsmen to gather and trade, the city has long been a favorite for all of these types of individuals. Money flowed like water, beautiful buildings and works of art were raised, and thousands chose to settle down in the city. Suncliff earned its name as Jewel of the Sea with ease and grace.

But now, this nickname carries with it a heavy sense of irony, for Suncliff is suffering from a terrible civil problem. The ancient city's rudimentary sewer system, while adequate for a small town, was quickly overwhelmed by the influx of new citizens. Waste and garbage constantly clogged the overburdened system and disease became a major problem. The filth also attracted numerous dangerous scavengers like ghouls, otyughs, and oozes, preventing workers from repairing and expanding the sewers. Worse, the city

government had grown too large and not only couldn't decide on how best to solve the problem, but realized that there simply weren't enough resources or funds to build a new sewer. Suncliff had simply grown too large too quickly.

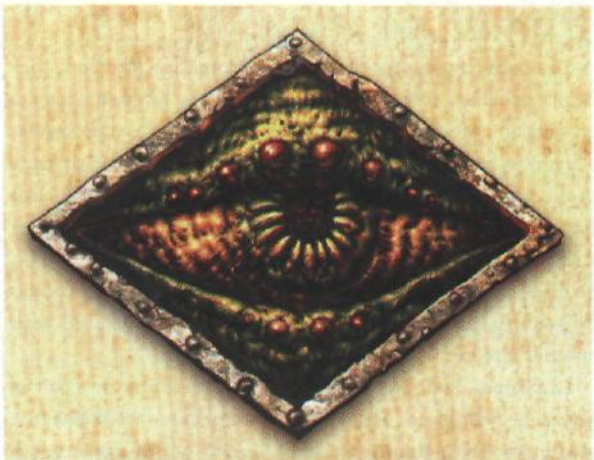
So the government decided on a temporary fix for the problem and created the Stink. The refuse and sewage problem was the most dire in the old slum district of the city. Rather than expend more resources cleaning up the city, the government founded the Wastewalker's Guild and walled off the entire slum district. The Wastewalkers were paid to lead large carriages through the streets of the city, collect garbage, and transport it to the walled-off district. The district was transformed into a massive landfill, and became known as the Stink.

♛ **Suncliff (Large city):** Nonstandard; AL N; 40,000 gp limit; Assets 4,900,000 gp; Population 24,500; Mixed (human 79%, halfling 9%, elf 5%, dwarf 3%, gnome 2%, half-elf 1%, half-orc 1%).

Authority Figure(s): Terrick the Stout, male human Ftr9 (Governor of Suncliff); Chloe Xero, female human Rog7 (supposed head of the Thieves Guild); Marrisa Vinn, female human Drd2/Wiz7 (head of the Magician's Cabal).

Important Characters: Grundel Orefist, male dwarf Bbn2/Ftr6 (Captain of the Town Guard); Versa Willowhisper, male elf Ftr2/Rog1/Sor3 (Trade/Merchant Guild Boss); Wes Lore, male human Pal6 (guardian of the Church of St. Cuthbert); Aus Olander, male human Clr3/Ftr2 (cleric of Fharlanghn).

Notes: Suncliff's assets are only a fraction of what a city its size should have; much of the city's money is squandered on attempts to cover up the Stink's influence on the rest of the city, a torturously complex bureaucratic system for dispersing funds, and rampant corruption.



The Blessings of Incabulos

Numerous diseases have been incubating in the depths of the Stink. The Deep Mother came to the Stink specifically to cultivate and encourage the growth of these diseases, and her efforts have been rewarded. Six new diseases have spawned in the Stink, and many of the prisoners captured by the fiendish locathahs are infected.

When a character is exposed to a disease, you should roll his Fortitude saving throws in secret to keep the players in the dark about their character's health until the effects of the disease begin to manifest. All of these diseases are supernatural in nature. Full descriptions appear on p. 61 and in sidebars throughout this adventure.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE (EL 5)

As the characters approach the wall surrounding the Stink, they hear a panicked scream from the other side. Moments later, a terrified gnome clambers onto the wall from the far side, teeters a bit on its edge, then falls heavily to the ground on the city-side of the wall. His face and arms bear deep, terrible gashes. This is Popollo (male gnome Exp5, Bluff +12), a high-ranking engineer who works for the Wastewalker's Guild. When he sees the PCs, he cries out for help and tries to get to his feet, but the fall has twisted his ankle and he collapses back to the ground with another scream.

Creatures: Popollo was chased out of the Stink by a pair of ghasts; he managed to escape while the creatures took down the guards who were escorting him in the Stink. The ghasts are on the other side of the wall and immediately attempt to climb over after Popollo. They must make a successful Climb check (DC 15) to get over the 10-ft.-high wall. If they are successful, they immediately attack Popollo and any other characters in sight.

Ghasts (2): hp 29 each (currently 19 and 17); *Monster Manual* 119.

Development: Popollo thanks the PCs repeatedly for their timely intervention. His eyes light up when he realizes they might be able to help him out with a problem.

"Listen friends; I've got a situation on my hands... It's the Stink; it's what we call our garbage problem. I work for the city, for the Wastewalker's Guild, if you must know. We're supposed to keep the streets clean and that means hauling the garbage to the Stink. Except things have been gettin' a bit more lively than usual in there. A lot of my employees have been vanishing in there lately, and just as many have been skipping out on the job because they say it's too dangerous. And after what I just went through, I'm inclined to agree.

"See...there's always been...critters...living in the Stink. I got no problem with them; in fact, they do us a favor, eating all that garbage. I'm talking about the typical scavengers here, ghouls, ghasts, otyughs, oozes. In any case, they were never really a problem till lately. Now, these things are up on the surface, causing trouble and generally making an unpleasant place even more so.

"Something's changed in the Stink. Something for the worse. There has to be a reason these monsters are suddenly so numerous. And then, of course, there's the missing workers and guards. I'm fairly certain something's taken them away into the depths of the Stink, cause the scavengers typically leave the...remains...behind. I've been in there more times than I care to count over the last week, and I've not seen a single body yet.

"You all handled those ghasts fairly easily. Say...you looking for work? If you can go in there, into the Stink, and maybe find out a little bit about what's going on, there's a reward. Five hundred gold coins for information about what's going on down there, and a bonus of five hundred if you fix it. And an additional hundred for each of my workers you find and rescue. How's that sound to ya?"

Brain Boil

This disease is spread in tainted meat. The Deep Mother is trying to cultivate a version of this disease that is spread via injury or contact, but has so far been unsuccessful. A brainboil victim suffers from increasingly painful headaches that almost feel as if his brain is being cooked alive. Aside from a reddening of the skin, there are no physical symptoms of this disease, but those in an advanced stage (less than 3 Wisdom or 3 Charisma) are driven insane with rage and attack any other living creature they notice within melee range.

Popollo is actually a bit more desperate than he lets on; the government has tasked him with the daunting task of making the Stink safer and putting a stop to the scavengers that have been spilling out into the streets, but they haven't yet approved an increase in guards or funding for such a task. He's lost three groups of hired mercenaries in the last week, and is at his wits' end. If he can't get the problem solved soon, he's afraid he'll be fired. He doesn't actually have the money to reward the PCs yet; he's hoping that approval for more funding comes through before the PCs solve the problem. He's willing to promise anything reasonable to the characters in an attempt to get them to check out the Stink; he'd rather worry about having to scrape together funds to pay a band of adventurers than go back into the monster-infested Stink. His Bluff skill is fairly good, but if the characters see through his deception he breaks down in tears and begs them to help.

If the PCs finally agree to enter the Stink, he thanks them again and gives them his four last *potions of remove disease*. "Been drinking these things like water lately...but I only have these four left. Make 'em count!" he says.

INTO THE STINK

The Stink itself is surrounded by a hastily constructed wood-and-stone wall. Several gates allow passage into and out of the Stink, but they are normally kept locked and guarded by four city watch agents (human War2). Popollo accompanies the PCs as far as the nearest gate and authorizes the guards to let them into the Stink. Without his approval, a character must adjust the guards' initial attitude from indifferent to friendly before they agree to let the PCs in. Alternately, the lock on the gate can be picked with a successful Open Lock check (DC 25), or the walls themselves can be climbed with a successful Climb check (DC 15).

Inside the walls, the Stink is a region of epic wretchedness.

> The air is visible in this ruined district; a thick yellow haze that seems almost to shimmer like heat rising from desert sands. Mountains of refuse lie heaped in the roads and between the ruined shells of collapsed buildings. The valleys between these massive heaps of refuse run thick with darkly colored liquid runoff and glistening sludge. Seagulls by the hundred perch atop the mounds and wheel in the skies above, and rats scuttle about in search of ripened food. But the worst of it all is the smell, an almost physical entity that seems to shroud the entire place in its reeking embrace.

The exact size and shape of the Stink is left undefined in this adventure, to help facilitate its placement in an established city in your campaign. The adventure assumes that the Stink is at least a mile square in area, and is bordered on its coastal side by a low (30-ft.-high) cliff overlooking a horribly polluted beach.

When a character first enters the Stink, he must immediately make a successful Fortitude save (DC 15) or become nauseated for one minute. Characters must continue to make this Fortitude save once per minute, with a cumulative +2 bonus for each previous saving throw attempt. Once a character makes the save, he has become accustomed to the ambient stench and is no longer nauseated.

More insidious than the Stink's smells are the numerous diseases thriving here. Once a day, a character who spends at least 10 minutes in the Stink is exposed to filth fever (*Dungeon Master's Guide* 292) from numerous tiny cuts and abrasions gained while simply moving through the place. Certain areas of the Stink (especially deep underground where the filth has more fully tainted things) can inflict additional diseases on the unwary.

Other dangers to explorers in the Stink include triggering an avalanche of refuse, slipping and cutting oneself on a jagged piece of metal, or of falling through a hollow in the trash and onto a mound of broken glass and bones. Each hour, a character must make a Survival check (DC 15) to avoid having some sort of foul accident; if the character has at least 5 ranks of Balance or Tumble, he gains a +2 synergy bonus on this Survival check. Failure indicates that the character takes 1d8 points of damage from a minor accident, and must immediately make a successful Fortitude save (DC 12) or contract filth fever. A successful Reflex save (DC 15) halves the damage done. A character who spends the hour motionless does not need to make this Survival check.

The Stink's denizens pose its most adaptive challenge to explorers. The ghouls, ghasts, otyughs, and other scavengers of the Stink normally dwell in the ruined, refuse-choked sewers, but the arrival of the fiendish locathahs in the deepest reaches of these sewers has forced the scavengers upward and onto the surface. Each hour, roll d% and consult the following table to determine if the characters encounter one of the Stink's more offensive denizens.

d% Roll	Encounter
01–40	No Encounter.
41–60	**2d6 dire rats**: hp 5 each; *Monster Manual* 64.
61–75	**1d4 ghouls**: hp 13 each; *Monster Manual* 119.
76–85	**Ghast**: hp 29; *Monster Manual* 119.
86–90	**Gray Ooze**: hp 31; *Monster Manual* 202.
91–95	**Otyugh**: hp 36; *Monster Manual* 204.
96–00	**Korras Fenn**: See below.

KORRAS FENN, HUMAN TRASH

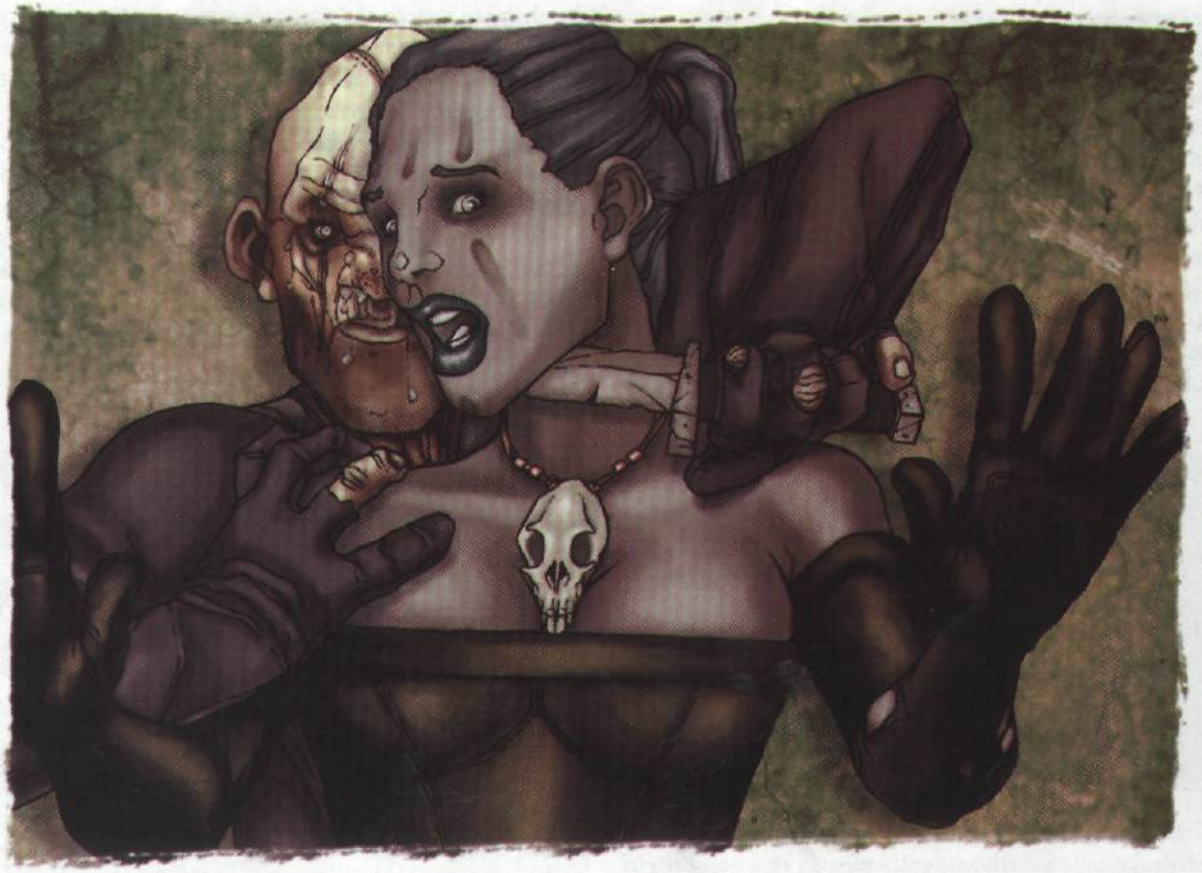
Korras is an escaped prisoner who recently clambered over the wall into the Stink and has been spending the last several days hiding out in an abandoned shack near the beach. He's waiting for the furor over his escape to die down now, and intends to sneak out of the Stink in a few days, steal a boat, and escape Suncliff. Unfortunately, he just realized he's come down with filth fever, and he desperately wants to escape the Stink before the disease kills him.

Korras can be encountered while the characters explore the Stink. If the characters remain in the Stink for more than 6 hours, he automatically notices their presence and begins stalking them. If spotted, Korras immediately attempts to grapple the weakest-looking PC and take him or her hostage at knifepoint, so as to force the other PCs to escort him out of the Stink and Suncliff. Otherwise, he waits until the PCs are distracted with another encounter before trying to take a hostage.

If he is captured alive and interrogated, his initial attitude is unfriendly. If this can be adjusted to friendly, Korras warns the characters he's seen fish-headed demons lurking in the Stink late after dusk. He says he's seen them mostly down on the beach, entering and exiting from a partially collapsed sewage tunnel protruding from in the cliff wall. Apart from this vague clue to the presence of the fiendish locathahs, he has little else to offer.

Korras Fenn, male human Com3/Rog2: CR 4; Medium humanoid (human); HD 3d4+2d6; hp 17 (currently 12); Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +2; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, club); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ evasion, trapfinding; AL CE; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 16 (currently 12), Con 13 (currently 10), Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +6, Escape Artist +5, Hide +7, Open Lock +5, Move Silently +7, Spot +5.



Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Stealthy.
Possessions: Club, ragged prison clothes.

UNDER THE STINK

The rudimentary sewer systems below the Stink have for the most part either collapsed or become completely clogged with refuse. One long section of tunnels remains fairly intact, and it is in the depths of these tunnels that the fiendish locathahs have made their lair and hidden those victims unfortunate enough to have been captured alive. The main entrance to these tunnels is located in the cliff face on the beach (area 1).

The characters can also find a secondary entrance into the ancient tunnels while they are exploring the Stink. Allow each character exploring the Stink to make a Search check each hour. A successful Search check (DC 26) uncovers a small opening at the base of a mound of defective wagon parts. This opening quickly widens and leads down to area 3.

DUNGEON FEATURES

Walls: While some of the walls in the Stink retain the ancient flagstones that once lined the sewer walls, these have for the most part fallen away into rubble. Most of what remains is little more than a natural cavern. The walls are quite stable, though, and chances of collapse are minimal. The rough stone walls are quite slippery with refuse and ooze, but can be scaled with a successful Climb check (DC 20).

Ceilings: The height of the ceiling in tunnels averages at 10 feet; in chambers it increases to 15 feet or more.

Light: There are no natural sources of light in the ruined sewers; the majority of its denizens possess darkvision and have no need for light. The descriptions of the various chambers assume that the characters are providing their own sources of light; if they are relying on darkvision or other means to navigate the chambers, adjust the descriptions accordingly.

Air Quality: Despite the lack of doors in the tunnels and the numerous small rat tunnels in the walls and ceiling, the air quality in the caverns is actually quite terrible. In the upper reaches (areas 1–8) the air reeks as bad as it does on the surface, but is still breathable. In areas 9–26, the horrible stink of the place becomes nearly overwhelming, and air quality takes a plunge. Breathing creatures must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 15 + 1 per previous check) every hour or become fatigued. A fatigued character must succeed on a Fortitude save each hour (DC 15 + 1 per previous check) or become exhausted. An exhausted character takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage every 15 minutes until the condition is corrected. Characters cannot recover from their fatigue or exhaustion until they reach an area of good air. Areas 27–35 are actually more bearable; the numerous surging waterways oxygenate the air enough that the quality of the air here is similar to that in areas 1–11—rank and stale, but breathable.

Wandering Monsters: There are a finite number of creatures living in these tunnels. Characters who make too much noise or

light might attract the attention of creatures in nearby caves, but for the most part once an area is cleared of creatures it remains so.

Nevertheless, the fiendish locathahs are well aware of the fact that other locathahs have been searching for them. Every hour the PCs spend in the Stink, there's a 10% chance they encounter a group of 4 fiendish locathahs (see area 18 for statistics) patrolling the Stink for intruders.

1. BLUFF ENTRANCE

The slick rock bluff face reflects an oily ocean. A rainbow-pattern of spoilage shimmers in tide pools, while the waves themselves curdle into a foamy yellow bile as they churn at the refuse on the shore. A cloying rotting stench permeates the air.

Two cave entrances open into the cliff face. The northern entrance is about ten feet up from the beach and twenty feet down from the Stink above. Thick coils of filth dangle from the mouth of the cave. About 70 feet south of this entrance is a second one, although this cave entrance is only about 2 feet high above an inlet of thick, rancid seawater that slowly washes back and forth into the cavern.

The cliff face is fairly easy to scale, requiring a successful Climb check (DC 10) to navigate. The rancid waters to the south flow from area 6; characters can enter the caves via this route but in so doing they expose themselves to the diseased waters (see area 6).

2. TRASHWAY (EL 6)

The cavern floor here slopes up sharply to the east. The roof above must have at one point partially caved in, for large mounds of filth, rubble, and waste lie in heaps about the

place. Insects writhe on the walls and floors and swirl in the air, and the scent of rotten flesh and decay is strong.

Creature: A pair of otyughs lurk in this room, lying in wait to attack any creatures that wander in.

Otyughs (2): hp 43, 40; *Monster Manual* 204.

Treasure: With a successful Search check (DC 20), a character can uncover a partially devoured skeleton with an intact belt pouch. The pouch contains 20 pp.

3. PARTIAL COLLAPSE

The northern wall of this cavern consists of a massive landslide of refuse and garbage. Up above you can see a small hole in the roof that appears to lead up and out of the cave.

A successful Climb check (DC 10) is required to clamber up the mound of loose garbage and up through the hole above.

4. GARBAGE CHUTE (EL 2)

This chamber appears to have been created from the garbage itself. Broken chairs, cobblestone, and the like form the "walls" of the passageway. Long braces of lumber and twisted metal support the roof, which sags dangerously with the weight of refuse above. Streams of filthy liquid dribble down from above to a pool of semi-liquescent goo, spoiled food, discarded refuse, and worse. Rats scuttle across the surface, scavenging what morsels they can.

Although the ceiling of this chamber may look unsafe, the true danger lies in the floor. Additionally, the horrible stink of this chamber is beyond that even of the surrounding regions. Characters who enter this room must make successful Fortitude saves (DC 14) each round or become nauseated for 1d6 rounds, even if they have already acclimated to the ambient odor of the Stink.

Trap: The floor of this chamber is quite unstable; the garbage has clogged a funnel-shaped pit in the ground. A successful Knowledge (dungeoneering) check allows a character to note that while the roof is fairly sound, the ground looks dangerous.

If a creature of Small size or larger walks into the room, the floor gives way and dumps the victim into a second cave below this one. Once the floor gives out, it takes nearly a month for the garbage to clog the hole again and create a new false floor.

Collapsing Floor: CR 2; location trigger; automatic reset (over the course of one month); DC 15 Reflex save avoids; 20 ft. deep (2d6 fall); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 25.

Note: A character who falls through this trap into the room below must also make a Reflex save (DC 15) or be buried in garbage. A buried character can escape with a successful Strength or Escape Artist check (DC 25); otherwise he must be dug free by allies. A buried character takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per minute; if he falls unconscious he must make a DC 15 Constitution check or take 1d6 points of lethal damage each minute thereafter until freed or dead.

Development: The dire rats in area 5 rush into this room if the floor gives way. Half of them scurry down into the chute to attack anything that they find down there while the others attack anyone clinging to the walls of the room or perched on the opposite side.

5. DIRE RAT LAIR (EL 4)

This cave has an exceptionally low ceiling; only three feet off the ground. Bits of refuse and rotting meat lie in heaps throughout the room.

Dripskin

The skin of a dripskin victim begins to run like melting wax until finally the poor wretch is completely flayed as his skin runs from his body. Puddles of liquefied skin retain the infection for up to a week after they are shed, and can continue to infect anyone who touches them.

Medium creatures must squeeze (see *Player's Handbook*, page 148) to move through this area. Large creatures can move through here with a successful Escape Artist check (DC 30), and creatures larger than that cannot enter the area at all.

Creatures: A dozen dire rats lurk in this room. They have little problem scuttling around in this room, and use their small size to great advantage against larger creatures that attempt to enter this room.

Dire Rats (12): hp 5 each; *Monster Manual* 64.

6. TIDE OF FILTH (EL 5)

Mounds of soggy timbers, blocks of mossy stone, and twisted lengths of rusted metal lie heaped amongst more foul and rancid forms of garbage in here. A sluggish tide of foamy seawater, thick with partially dissolved waste and worse, bisects the cavern. A jagged "bridge" of ruined doors, wagons, metal bars, and other solid trash forms a crude bridge over the frothing waters.

The garbage here is particularly dangerous to move through; each high tide rearranges the mounds, washing some of the stuff out to sea but depositing just as much in new piles of trash. Characters must make a successful Balance check (DC 12) each round they try to move across the unstable landscape. Failure indicates that the character takes 1d4 points of damage as he cuts himself on a length of rusty metal or broken glass, and must immediately make a successful Fortitude save (DC 12) or contract filth fever.

The waters below are equally foul. Any creature immersed in the water or drinking the water must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 16) or contract blinding sickness.

Creature: A particularly large otyugh has claimed this room as its lair. The creature is particularly agile and can move about on the garbage with ease (even if it rolls a 1 on its Balance check, it can successfully navigate the trash without hurting itself).

Advanced Otyugh: CR 5; Large aberration; HD 8d8+24; hp 58; Init +2; Speed 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +6; Grp +11; Atk +7 melee (1d6+1, tentacle); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+1, 2 tentacles) and +2 melee (1d6, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA constrict 1d6, disease, improved grab; SQ darkvision 60 ft., scent; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 5, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Balance +12, Escape Artist +4, Hide +8, Listen +4, Spot +4.

Feats: Agile, Alertness, Skill Focus (Balance).

Treasure. The remains of three Wastewalker's Guild workers are buried near the eastern end of the bridge. A successful Search check (DC 20) uncovers them. Their belt pouches are intact, and contain a total of 20 gp, three pearls worth 100 gp each, and a *potion of cure light wounds*.

7. MORASS OF FILTH (EL 5)

Runoff from recent rains and water from high tides have trickled through the organic debris here to coagulate into a pit of foul-smelling ooze.

The thick layer of sludge in this room is only 2 feet deep, but anything moving through it is slowed to half-speed. Additionally, the horrible reek of the sludge forces characters in the room to make successful Fortitude saves (DC 14) each round or become nauseated for 1d6 rounds, even if they have already acclimated to the ambient odor of the Stink.

The ledge along the eastern rim is sloped down toward the pool and slick with foul runoff from above. A successful Balance check (DC 15) is required to safely navigate the ledge without falling into the muck.

Trap: A large bubble of poisonous gas is trapped in the slime. A significant disturbance (such as if a character tries to walk through the pool or falls into the ooze) causes the bubble to rise to the surface and burst.

Poison Gas Bubble: CR 5; hazard; location trigger; automatic reset (after 1 hour); gas; multiple targets (all targets in area 7); never miss; poison (inhaled, DC 18 Fortitude save resists, 1d4 Wis/2d4 Wis); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 25.

8. LOCATHAH SCOUTS (EL 3)

This part of the cavern appears to be flooded with foul-smelling water. The liquid sloshes about rhythmically, filling the cave with a loud churning and sucking sound. The water's foamy surface reflects light with a prismatic sheen.

Skitterpox

This disturbing disease causes numerous yellow pustules to form on the victim's skin. These pustules are disturbingly mobile, and slither around on the victim's skin, leaving angry red scars in their wake and eventually festooning the victim with a complex network of scar tissue. The disease is transmitted by injury, at which point the sores can actually be seen to skitter from the infected body and into the victim's wounds. Charisma damage caused by skitterpox is permanent damage.

This large tidepool connects to the sea via a long underwater tunnel. At low tide, the pool's depth recedes enough that a character can reach the tunnel on the east side by wading through surging water, but for the remainder of the day the entire cave is flooded. The water itself is treated as rough water for purposes of swimming; a character wading through it must make a successful Balance check (DC 20) or be swept into the pool. The pool is 30 feet deep at low tide, and 35 feet deep at high tide.

Creatures: The locathah tribes have sent three small scouting parties into Suncliff over the past few weeks in order to determine where the fiendish locathah have been hiding and to find out what hand the citizens of Suncliff have had in the raids. The first two groups vanished without a trace (attacked and captured by the fiendish locathahs), and the third group has just recently arrived here.

These locathahs have a few *potions of air breathing* (identical to *potions of water breathing* but allowing aquatic creatures to exist on land for 10 hours per potion), but aren't comfortable using them all at once to explore the lower caves. Their leader, a ranger named Kilorkus, went alone into the depths of the cave over 9 hours ago to search for additional sea cave entrances to the caverns. The foul water is as wretched to them as the foul air is to air-breathing creatures, and they desperately want Kilorkus to return soon with news so they can return to their tribe.

When the PCs enter this area, the locathahs observe them from underwater. They have no interest in contacting the PCs, since they believe that the citizens of Suncliff are in league with the fiendish locathahs. Nor do they want to attack the characters, since they have no idea how strong the PCs are. Unless the characters notice them with a Spot check as they pass by the pool (the locathah have Hide checks of +1, and lurk 30 feet down so Spot checks suffer a –3 penalty), the PCs most likely pass by without encountering the locathahs.

Locathah (6): hp 9 each, *Monster Manual* 169.

Treasure: The locathah have amongst them 2 *potions of air breathing* left. While these objects are likely useless to the PCs, they can still be sold to an interested buyer for 375 gp apiece.

Development: This scouting group has no intention of fighting anyone at the moment. They are here to map out the caverns, and to find any missing eggs or locathahs. They have little love for the citizens of Suncliff, and by extension, any PCs they find in this cave. Fishing boats tend to catch locathah in their nets, and the locathahs believe (erroneously) that wizards kill these captured locathah for their scales.

Some of their grievances with Suncliff are well founded, though. The pollution from the Stink has increasingly tainted the waters surrounding Suncliff; the locathah tribes have sent ambassadors to the city several times in the past, but their grievances have always been ignored.

If the PCs spot them, the locathahs come to the surface of the tide pool and demand loudly (in Aquan) that their eggs be returned and the alliance with the fiends be cut off. The locathahs are quick to work themselves into a fit of hatred, and unless an Aquan-speaking character can adjust their hostile attitude to at least indifferent, the locathah attack after three rounds of yelling.

If the locathah are befriended, they beg the PCs to delve deeper into the caves, find Kilorkus, rescue their eggs, and put a stop to the fiendish locathah raids. Unfortunately, it is too late to rescue Kilorkus or the eggs.

9. SOGGY GRAVES (EL 4)

The scent of rotten flesh is particularly strong here. Wooden coffins lie piled in a chaotic mess, the sodden wood buckling and pulling apart at the seams to spill their foul contents into a terrible mound below.

Unscrupulous undertakers, in order to skim more profit, dump their "clients" into the Stink after liberating any jewelry or expensive clothing. They assume that no one would ever wander into the Stink to search for the evidence. In any case, the coffins here have fallen through a weak spot in the ceiling; the hole closed up on itself after dumping the coffins here.

Creatures: A small pack of four ghouls lurk in this room, having recently discovered the cache of bodies. They squat ravenously around the mound of coffins, and suffer a –5 penalty to Listen and Spot checks to hear intruders into this room.

Ghouls (4): hp 13 each; *Monster Manual* 119.

10. OOZEFALL

A reeking black tarry substance oozes thickly from the walls here to collect in a slick swath across the floor. The ooze runs slowly down the sloped floor into a natural trough that empties into a larger room to the south. The air here seems thicker, warmer, and stale.

This nasty-smelling ooze consists of rotted animal and plant matter from a particularly large and foul pond nestled between mountains of rotting refuse on the surface above. The stuff makes the floor here exceedingly slippery, and any character who attempts to move across the floor must make a successful Balance check (DC 15) or slip and fall. Characters who fall quickly slide down the trough and into the pool of ooze in area **11**.

11. OOZE BATH (EL 5)

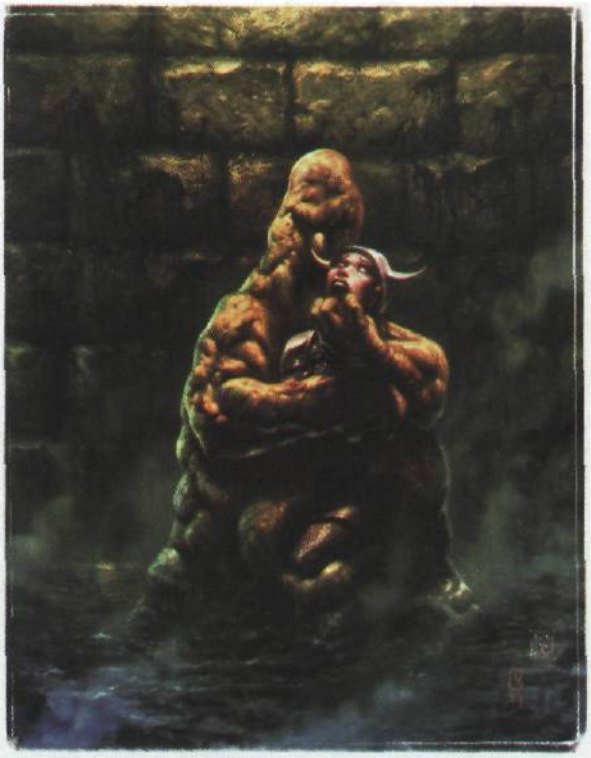
Stagnant foamy water and ropy coils of black ooze drool down the walls and through the ceiling into a large pool of noxious slime in the center of this cavern. The surface of the pool bubbles now and again, venting vapors into the already horribly tainted air.

This foul pool of liquid is only 5 feet deep, but it nevertheless poses a fairly significant hazard to characters who fall into it or otherwise try to wade or swim through it. Characters who enter the pool must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 15) or become nauseated for 1d6 rounds. Worse, anyone completely submerged in the pool (including those who slipped in area **10** and slid into the pool) must make a second successful Fortitude save (DC 16) or contract blinding sickness.

Creature: Deep in these caves (in Area **23**), a portal to the Paraelemental Plane of Ooze has opened. Ooze paraelementals have found this area to be quite comfortable, and a number of the foul creatures now lurk in the caves. This pool has become the home of a pair of them.

An ooze paraelemental generally takes the form of a dark brown torso, head, and arms rising from a pool of muck. It has gaping black indentations where its eyes and mouth would be. A fusion of elemental earth and water, ooze paraelementals speak Aquan and Terran in burbling tones. Ooze paraelementals are detailed further in the *Manual of the Planes* on pages 182–184.

Medium Ooze Paraelementals (2): CR 3; Medium elemental (earth, water); HD 4d8+12; hp 30 each; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., swim 50 ft.; AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +3; Grp +6; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+4 plus 1d6 acid, slam); SA acid; SQ



elemental traits; SV Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Skills: Listen +3, Spot +4.

Feats: Improved Sunder, Power Attack.

Acid (Ex): An ooze paraelemental's touch deals 40 points of acid damage per round to metal or wooden objects. Armor or clothing dissolves and becomes useless immediately unless it succeeds at a Reflex save (DC 13). A metal or wooden weapon that strikes an ooze paraelemental also dissolves immediately unless it succeeds at a Reflex save. If an ooze paraelemental successfully grapples an opponent, the opponent's armor must likewise make a Reflex save at a –4 penalty or dissolve.

Tactics: The ooze paraelementals take exception to any intrusions into their pool, and attack any intruders mercilessly. They ignore anyone who moves through the room without entering the pool.

12. OLD WALL

A large, crumbling stone wall lies at a steep angle to the west, apparently having fallen through from above into this chamber. Decorative frescoes of faces in profile contrast with cracks, missing parts, and edges worn smooth.

This stone wall fell into this cave from the surface many years ago. A successful Search check (DC 20) reveals a small hollowed section covered by a cleverly disguised false stone. If this false stone plate is removed, a gold statuette of an attractive human woman is revealed.

Treasure: The gold statuette weighs 20 lbs. but is worth 900 gp. A successful Knowledge (history) or Bardic Knowledge check (DC 20) allows the character to recognize the subject of the statuette as one Cassandra Adincourt, an ancient and famous architect from Suncliff's past.

Stone Plate: 3 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 15; break DC 22.

13. LONG-FORGOTTEN STATUE

A once-magnificent stone statue of an elven woman holding a longbow lies discarded here, battered and chipped away to reveal only the most basic of features.

A successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 20) identifies the statue as depicting Ehlonna, goddess of the woodlands. The statue is a remnant from a time when Suncliff was little more than a small collection of buildings at the edge of an unsettled frontier. The statue was removed to build a tavern that has long since gone out of business.

Development: The statue weighs 650 lbs. but is too badly damaged to have a monetary value. Nevertheless, if a worshipper of Ehlonna sees to the cleaning and restoration of the statue, which requires a week of work and a successful Craft (sculpture) check (DC 22), and then either returns the statue to one of her temples or erects the statue in a wilderness region, the Goddess of the Woodlands takes note. The next time that character sleeps, he receives a vision from Ehlonna in which the goddess answers 5 questions for that character, as if a *commune* spell had been cast. The mystic dream also grants the character experience points as if he defeated a CR 1 creature (300 XP for a 4th-level character). If more than one character was involved in this restoration, they all gain identical XP awards but the dream is a shared dream and Ehlonna still only answers a total of 5 questions, no matter how many people share the dream.

14. OOZE POOLS (EL 4)

Three ponds of ooze fill hollows in the floor here, the still, dark surface reflecting available light with a prismatic sheen.

These three ooze pools are shallow, but the ooze itself is thick. Moving through a 5-foot section of ooze costs 10 feet of movement. Worse, a **Creature** lurks in the largest pool.

Creature: A solitary gray ooze floats atop the surface of the largest pool, indistinguishable from the surrounding muck until it strikes or a victim stumbles into it.

Gray Ooze: hp 31; *Monster Manual* 202.

15. LOOTED CRYPT

The southern wall has collapsed, revealing a small rectangular room beyond. A single stone sarcophagus sits in the center of the room, its lid smashed into rubble and strewn about the chamber.

A successful Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC 15) reveals that this damage is quite recent. A group of fiendish locathahs looted this crypt recently when they discovered that parts of these caverns contained old constructions from Suncliff's distant past. Their tracks are quite obvious, and a successful Search or Survival check (DC 4) notes them in the muddy ground. The tracks lead to area 18, where the fiendish locathahs still lurk.

16. ASH PILE (EL 5)

Black soot covers the floor, the ceiling, and the walls of this place. Streamers of tar leak slowly from the roof to gather in mounds on the floor. Dozens of fractured and burned timbers fill the chamber in a tangled mess.

An early attempt to burn the Stink sent a cloud of thick, rancid smoke straight into Suncliff. The burn project ended quickly when the city's wealthy placed pressure on the governor. This large patch of ashes and burnt timbers is a remnant of the attempt.

The timbers filling this room make navigating it difficult for Medium or larger creatures. Each round, a Medium creature must make a successful Escape Artist check (DC 15) or his speed is reduced to 5 ft. The Escape Artist DC rises to 30 for Large creatures, and Huge or larger creatures cannot move through the timbers without first clearing them out.

Creature: An ochre jelly recently seeped into this room from the Stink above. It's been preying on the odd fiendish locathahs and dire rats that stumble into this area. The jelly does not suffer the movement penalties imposed by the fallen timbers in this room.

Ochre Jelly: hp 69; *Monster Manual* 202.

17. FALLEN MONUMENT

A stone obelisk stands in the middle of this room. The three sides appeared to have words scrawled up and down each side, but time and erosion have cracked and worn smooth most of the letters.

A successful Decipher Script check (DC 20) and 5 minutes of work allows a character to decipher enough of the writing on the monument to discern that it is a memorial for a long-dead ranger by the name of Lokan Torakian who was killed while defending Suncliff from an attack by a particularly large manticore. The words make a passing reference to Lokan's Fortress in the nearby mountains, a fortress that has apparently been forgotten by the local populace. This could provide the PCs with a hook for a new adventure set nearby Suncliff.

18. FESTERING TIDE POOL (EL 4)

A large tide pool dominates the majority of this cave. The pool's surface surges violently from underwater currents; the violent activity has churned the surface of the pool into a froth of yellow bubbles.

This polluted tidepool connects to the sea via a fairly direct underwater passage. Several **Creatures** currently use the pool to relax. The waters of the pool are considered to be rough for resolving Swim checks.

Creatures: A small group of fiendish locathahs have wandered up into these caves in search of loot; they recently broke into the crypt at area 15 and are currently counting out their gains while they relax in the pool here. The fiendish locathahs are distracted by their count, and suffer a –5 penalty on Spot and Listen checks to notice intrusions into their cave. If they

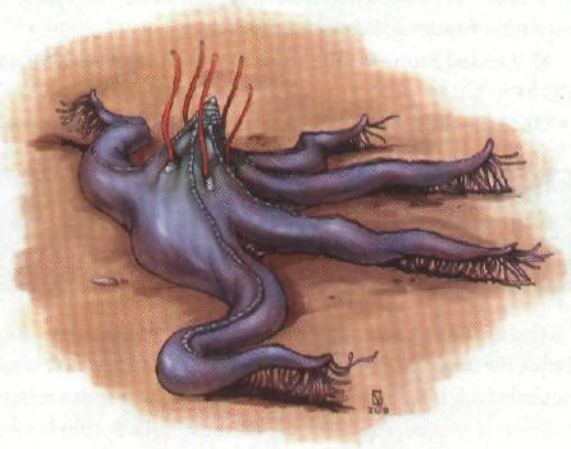
AIRGILL

Locathahs can survive out of water for only a very short time. The Deep Mother knew that she and her children would be traveling above land for much of their stay in Suncliff, and brought along a large supply of airgills as a result.

An airgill is a living symbiotic creature that looks like a long-armed starfish with bright blue legs, fleshy red tendrils on its back, and a pale violet underside. The tips of its arms are covered with pale violet tendrils.

When placed on the throat of a willing aquatic creature, an airgill latches on with its arms and weaves its tendrils into and through the creature's gills. The symbiont feeds slowly on the creature's blood, and reduces the host's Constitution score by –1 for as long as it is attached. In return, it constantly oxygenates its host's gills, allowing it to function indefinitely out of water.

For further rules about symbionts, see pages 215–216 of the *Fiend Folio*.



see the PCs, they attempt to flee deeper into the caves to alert the others to the intrusion.

Fiendish Locathahs (5): CR 1/2; Medium humanoid (aquatic, extraplanar) HD 2d8–2; hp 7; Init +1; Spd 10 ft., swim 60 ft.; AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk/Full Atk +1 melee (1d8/×3, longspear) or +2 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SA smite good (+2 damage against a good foe) 1/day; SQ darkvision 60 ft., resistance to cold 5, resistance to fire 5, spell resistance 7; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 9, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills: Craft (weaponsmithing) +6, Listen +6, Spot +6, Swim +8.

Feats: Great Fortitude.

Possessions: Longspear, light crossbow, 20 bolts, airgill.

Treasure: The fiendish locathahs have stacked the loot they pilfered from area 15 in a small underwater hollow about ten feet below the surface of the tide pool. This consists of 170 gp, two gold rings worth 400 gp each, a gold necklace worth 200 gp, a masterwork bastard sword, and a suit of masterwork chainmail.

19. PUDDLE OF MUD (EL 5)

A large pool of gray mud fills this chamber. Bits of rubbish and what look like bones protrude from the stuff.

The mud is only about 6 inches deep, but it is thick enough that moving through it halves a character's speed.

Creatures: Two ooze paraelementals from the vortex in area 23 have settled in this pool of mud. The paraelementals ignore anyone who passes by without entering their mud, but quickly attack anyone who dares enter the pool. The paraelementals can use their swim speed in the mud.

Medium Ooze Paraelementals (2): hp 30 each; see area 11.

20. SEALED CRYPT

The southern wall here has worn thin from years of erosion. A successful Search check (DC 20) notes tiny fractures in the wall, as well as a couple of finger-sized holes that reveal the presence of a room beyond. The stone wall can easily be smashed through by a strong, determined individual.

Eroded Stone Wall: 1 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 15; Break DC 24.

Once the wall has been broken through, read the following:

This is a small crypt. The stone sarcophagus in the middle of the room rests undisturbed, but the mold and slime on the walls have ruined the offerings left ages ago on the stone shelves.

This chamber has remained sealed for several decades...long before the Stink itself was formed. As a result, the air in here is particularly foul. If the room isn't allowed to air for at least a minute before it is entered, characters within must make Fortitude saves every round to avoid suffocation damage as detailed under "Air Quality" above. The sarcophagus lid weighs 500 lbs.

Treasure. The sarcophagus contains a long-dead skeleton and a respectable amount of treasure. Several mounds of gold coins are heaped at the skeleton's feet, 200 gp in all. The sarcophagus also contains a silver comb set with moonstones worth a total of 300 gp, and a fine silver chain necklace set with a tiny emerald worth a total of 400 gp.

21. GUARD ROOM (EL 3)

An ancient, horribly rusted gate blocks access to a short side tunnel off the main route here. The narrow room beyond is choked with moldy crates. A ruined, rusty ladder leads up to a hole in the ceiling that is hopelessly clogged with rubbish.

This chamber once contained an access tunnel to the surface, but the tunnel has long since been buried under mountains of trash above. The iron gate is rusted shut. A concealed door on the eastern wall allows easier access to this chamber. The door can be found with a successful Search check (DC 18).

Rusted Gate: Hardness 5; hp 25; Break DC 22.

Creatures: Four fiendish locathahs lurk behind the crates here. They have been ordered by the Deep Mother to keep an eye out for anyone attempting to invade the caves. If they see intruders, they fire upon them with their crossbows, using the crates as cover.

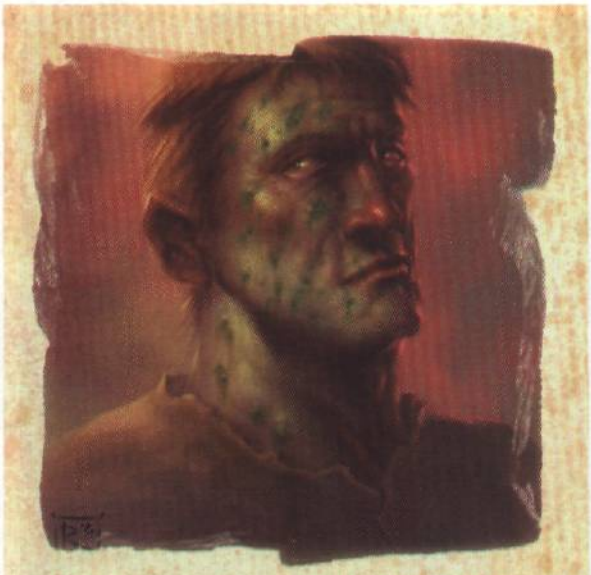
Fiendish Locathahs (4): hp 9 each; see area 18.

22. NOT-SO-ESCAPED PRISONER

A body of a woman in rags lies face down in the muck here, her blood pooling in the hollows of the floor, her arm outstretched ahead of her, as if reaching for freedom or salvation.

This is the body of a sorcerer named Yelta Kier. Captured several days ago by the fiendish locathahs, she escaped imprisonment deeper in the caves with the aid of a fellow prisoner named Warren Gyreson. The two were separated soon thereafter. While Warren managed to make it to area 25 (where he yet hides), Yelta made it this far before the fiendish locathahs in area 21 ambushed her and killed her. The locathahs know she's diseased, so they let the body lie where it died until the Deep Mother or one of her undead can come to collect it.

An examination of the body combined with a successful Heal check (DC 15) reveals raw, chaffed wrists and ankles and several crossbow bolt wounds to the chest and neck. More disturbingly, her body is covered with runny green rashes that reek of compost. These are symptoms of greenblight, one of the terrible new diseases that have spawned in the depths of the Stink. Anyone who touches the body must make a successful Fortitude check (DC 20) or catch greenblight.



Greenblight

Greenblight is a particularly horrid disease that causes great green rashes and open sores that reek of compost to appear on the victim's body. A victim drained to a Strength score of 0 remains horribly aware of his situation, but cannot move and quickly takes root in any available soil. This mound of writhing, wet plant matter can survive for months if exposed regularly to sunlight and a moist environment. This plant matter remains contagious until it dies.

23. OOZE VORTEX (EL 6)

This whole cavern contains the collected rainwater runoff, seawater, and numerous forms of liquid waste of this cavern complex. Goop and slime trickle down the walls. The pool is thick, foamy, and clouded with olive green algae and brown sediment. The level of the water rhythmically rises and falls two to three feet once every ten seconds, as if something deep inside it were breathing.

Many years ago a gnome conjurer bought several buildings in the old slum, intending to use the buildings to hide his illegal magic experiments. The first of these experiments resulted in a terrible explosion that killed the gnome and damaged or destroyed many of his magic items.

One of these items was a *well of many worlds*. The item was nearly destroyed in the explosion and hurled into the sewers. Eventually, the malfunctioning device came to rest in this chamber. Over the years, its magic further unraveled until finally it formed a semi-stable portal into the Material Plane from the Paraelemental Plane of Ooze. Only creatures of Medium or smaller size can fit through the portal, along with the odd surge of paraelemental ooze. These currents of ooze are what gives the pool here its odd, rhythmic tide.

The pool itself is 30 feet deep and completely opaque. The ooze is far too thick for water breathing creatures to breathe. At the pool's base is the portal to the Paraelemental Plane of Ooze; living matter can pass into the Material Plane via the portal, but not out of it. The portal can be permanently deactivated with a successful *dispel magic* (CL 17).

The narrow ledges that run around the edge of this pool are only two feet wide and filthy with slime and refuse. A successful Balance check (DC 15) is required to move along them without slipping and falling into the ooze pool.

Creatures: Two medium ooze paraelementals lurk in this pool. As with the paraelementals found elsewhere in the Stink, they only attack creatures that enter their ooze pool.

- **Medium Ooze Paraelementals (2)**: hp 30 each; see area 11.

24. GREEN SLIME (EL 4)

What appears to be a shallow pool of murky water that fills this section of the tunnel is actually a thin layer of silt over a swath of green slime (*Dungeon Master's Guide* 76). A character who makes a successful Spot check (DC 15) followed by a successful Knowledge (nature) or Survival check (DC 20) recognizes the hazard for what it is. Otherwise, any creature walking through this area has a flat 75% chance of stumbling into the dangerous slime.

25. WARREN'S HIDEOUT (EL 1)

This side passageway is choked with rubble. The tunnel has collapsed completely about twenty feet from the main passageway. A particularly large and nasty mound of trash has collected in the dead-end. The air here is remarkably fresh.

The air quality in this side passageway is fed by a narrow shaft that leads up to the surface.

Creatures: Warren Gyreson, an ex-prisoner of the fiendish locathahs, managed to escape confinement with the aid of Yelta Kier, a fellow prisoner. Yelta was recently slain by the locathahs; her body can be found in area 22. The locathahs think Warren

Table 1: The Blessings of Incabulos

D6	Disease	Infection	DC	Incubation	Damage
1	Brainboil	Injested	13	1d3 days	1d4 Wis, 1d4 Cha
2	Dripskin	Contact	14	1 day	1d3 Con
3	Gibbering Gout	Injested	17	1 day	1d10 Dex, 1d6 Int
4	Greenblight	Contact	20	1 day	1d8 Str
5	Skitterpox	Injury	12	1d6 days	2d4 Dex, 1d6 Cha
6	Wormwarts	Inhaled	15	1d3 days	1 Con, 1d6 Cha

escaped out of the tunnels into the Stink above, but in fact he's merely hidden himself under a mound of refuse at the end of this dead-end passageway.

Warren erutps from the rubble if anyone wanders into this passageway, ranting and howling. He is in the advanced stages of brainboil, one of the terrible diseases born in the depths of the Stink. Sample ravings include, "Fharlanghn has sent you! He has provided the path away from the Temple of Incabulos! I was too cowardly to save her but I ran, like Fharlanghn would have liked!"

Warren's sickness has wreaked havoc on his sanity, and he now sees all other humanoids as fiendish locathah. Therefore, if any character approaches within 5 feet, his eyes bulge and he attacks.

Warren Gyreson, male human Rog1: CR 1; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d6+1; hp 5; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk/Full Atk +1 melee (1d6+1 plus disease, club); SA disease, sneak attack +1d6; SQ trapfinding; AL LN; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will –4; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 2, Cha 4.

Disease (Ex): Any creature who comes into contact with Warren, including being damaged by his club, must make a Fortitude save (DC 13) to avoid catching brainboil.

Skills: Balance +8, Climb +4, Disable Device +6, Escape Artist +4, Hide +4, Jump +4, Knowledge (local) +3, Move Silently +4, Search +3, Spot +0, Swim +4.

Feats: Agile, Stealthy.

Ad-Hoc XP award: Warren is a member of the Wastewalker's Guild. If the PCs can rescue him, award them 125% normal XP for this encounter.

26. CASTOFFS

A small pool of runny mud and stagnant water fills most of this cavern. Bones of various humanoids litter the shores of the pool, but something seems fundamentally wrong about their shapes.

The Deep Mother's efforts to produce new fiendish locathahs from captured eggs have only recently begun to show promising results. Her early experiments were universally failures; unfit even for food. The Deep Mother dumped these bodies in this pool.

An examination of a skeleton followed by a successful Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 20) allows the character to determine that the bones were from some form of fiendish humanoid.

27. TEMPLE ENTRANCE (EL 3)

The air quality seems much better here than elsewhere in the caverns. The sound of surging water echoes from deeper in the caves. More welcome is the relative lack of refuse and rubbish in this chamber; only a few nasty stains and a low, rancid odor taint the otherwise clean chamber.

This cavern marks the beginning of the caverns the fiendish locathah have claimed as their own. From this point on, the air quality in the caverns is constantly refreshed by the numerous sea caves and tide pools.

Trap: The eastern exit from this chamber is warded with a *glyph of warding* placed by the Deep Mother to help prevent fur-

ther escapes from area 29. The *glyph* is triggered by any non-evil, non-outsider that passes over it.

Glyph of Warding (Blast): CR 3; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (glyph of warding [blast], 5th-level cleric, 2d8 sonic, DC 14 Reflex save half damage); multiple targets (all targets within 5 ft.); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

28. TEMPLE GUARDIAN (EL 5)

This room appears to be a sewage junction. Numerous small stony and rusted metal tubes protrude from the ceiling and walls into this circular chamber. The room itself is flooded with muddy water, bits of refuse bobbing on its surface.

The tubes and tunnels leading up from this chamber are all collapsed, but still allow air to seep into the room. The water in the pool below has collected foul runoff and drainage from the Stink above for many years. The water itself is 20 feet deep and horribly polluted; one of the foul new diseases the Deep Mother has been trying to cultivate taints the pool. Characters who drink the water or fall into the pool must make a Fortitude save (DC 16) or contract the gibbering gout.

Creature: A gibbering mouther that has been living down here for some time has allied itself with the fiendish locathahs. In return for regular offerings of food, the creature has agreed to guard this chamber against intrusions by non-locathahs. The thing hides in the pool with only a few eyes and mouths above the waterline, and surges up to attack intruders the instant it notices them.

Gibbering Mouther: hp 42; *Monster Manual* 126.

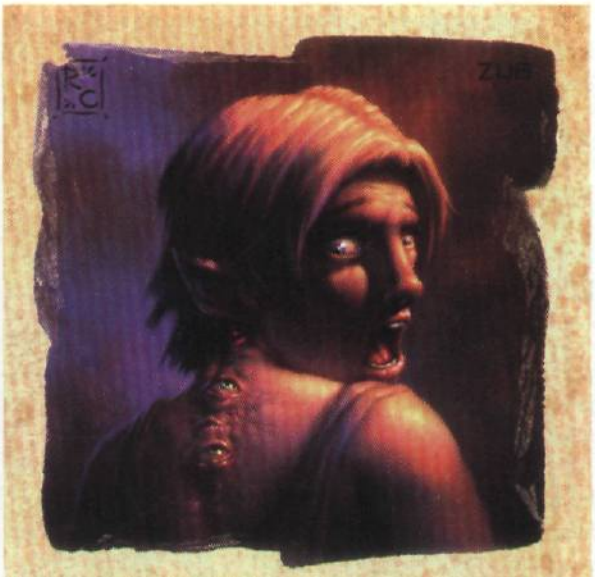
Development: The terrible din created by the gibbering mouther serves the fiendish locathahs as an alarm. If they hear the creature rise up and attack intruders, they mobilize their forces to defend the remaining rooms. Areas 29–38 assume that the fiendish locathahs are alerted; if the characters manage to make it through this encounter without alerting the gibbering mouther, they find the fiendish locathahs relaxing and unprepared.

29. PRISON CAVE (EL 4)

This rectangular chamber is flooded with about six inches of filthy water. Numerous metal loops have been driven into the stone walls, and from them hang long cords of thick leather.

Creatures: Workers and guards captured in the Stink above, as well as any PCs the fiendish locathahs catch alive, are imprisoned here. The Deep Mother uses the captured prisoners to test the effects of the various diseases she's discovered in these caverns.

There are currently four malnourished humans imprisoned here. All are members of the Wastewalker's Guild, and none are in any condition to fight without rest and healing. All four are suffering from filth fever.



Gibbering Gout

Of these six diseases, the gibbering gout is perhaps the most horrifying. As the disease progresses, the victim's sanity slowly slips away and his joints and spine begin to swell and grow tiny rudimentary eyes and mouths. These organs babble and writhe, creating a constant murmur. When the victim's Dexterity is reduced to 0, he begins a rapid and painful transformation into a gibbering mouther. The victim suffers 1d4 points of Constitution damage per round. Once his Constitution score reaches 0, his body bursts open and a fully-formed gibbering mouther emerges. Tiny or smaller creatures do not spawn gibbering mothers upon dying. Larger creatures only spawn one, despite their actual size upon death. Creatures without skeletons or exoskeletons are immune to this disease.

30. GUARDROOM

Three tidepools fill this cave with a constant sloshing sound as the water levels in each pool rhythmically rise and fall to unseen currents.

The pools in this chamber and area 31 are connected by several underground flooded tunnels. These tunnels eventually connect to the sea. It is from these pools that the fiendish locathahs first came to the Stink.

Creatures: Six fiendish locathahs lurk in the pools here. Four wait in the northern pool and one waits in each of the southern pools. They wait to attack intruders until the majority of them have passed into area 31 so they can block off an easy retreat and flank the intruders with the locathahs in that area.

Fiendish Locathahs (6): hp 9 each; see area 18.

Development: If combat breaks out in this room, the locathahs in area 31 rush in to aid the locathah here two rounds after combat begins.

31. LIVING CHAMBERS (EL 4)

Several fairly calm tidepools dominate this cavern. Numerous gnawed bones and half-eaten fish and dire rats lie strewn about the ground between them.

Each pool is connected to the other by a network of underwater tunnels that eventually lead to the sea. The pools themselves are about 20 feet deep on average, with numerous ledges and protrusions along their walls.

Creatures: These pools are used by the fiendish locathahs to rest and relax. The six fiendish locathahs found here wait to attack intruders until the interlopers are first assaulted by the guards in area 30.

Fiendish Locathahs (6): hp 9 each; see area 18.

32. INCUBATOR

Foul-smelling liquid fills a pair of large pools in this chamber, the surfaces calm and oily. Several round spheres, jelly-like and translucent, bob on the surface of each pool. Every now and then one of the spheres twitches or pulses slightly, as if something inside were writhing to escape.

The Deep Mother has infused both of these 10-foot-deep pools with the unholy energies of Incabulos' realm. The spheres in the pools are the last of the stolen locathah eggs, incubating in the tainted pools and slowly transforming into fiendish monstrosities. Unfortunately for the locathah tribes, the eggs are beyond the point of redemption. They still have several weeks until they hatch, though, and destroying them should be a simple matter.

The fluid in which the eggs float, however, is rife with disease. Anyone who comes into contact with the stuff must make a successful Fortitude save or contract a random disease selected from the "Blessings of Incabulos" sidebars (the DC for this save depends upon which disease you choose).

33. SHRINE TO INCABULOS (EL 4)

Rotting bodies, both locathah and human, hang on hooks above a makeshift stone altar against the east wall. Bits of rotting matter and streaks of blood cover the altar and ground nearby. The walls of this chamber bear intricate carvings that appear to be only half finished. Those sections that are nearly complete show fields of diseased and writhing humanoids sprawled on a

vast shoreline, while numerous fish-like humanoids emerge from the waves to gather up the fallen in large nets. A large, sloshing tide pool fills much of the northern half of the chamber.

This room is slowly being transformed into a shrine dedicated to Incabulos. The bodies hanging above the altar are slowly infusing the stone with rot and disease. Likewise, the carvings on the wall are intended to fill those in the room with awe at the power of Incabulos and his chosen locathah minions. Currently, although the chamber is disturbing and foul, it does not bear any evil auras or unholy magic.

The tide pool to the north connects to those in area 31 by a long flooded passageway. This pool, which is about 30 feet deep, is the home of the three adepts who serve the Deep Mother.

Creatures: These three fiendish locathah adepts typically spend their time working on the wall carvings, but if they are aware of the PCs' intrusion into the temple they take up positions in the pool, using it as cover while they fire upon any intruders with their crossbows.

Fiendish Locathahs, Adp2 (3): CR 2; Medium humanoid (aquatic, extraplanar) HD 2d8+2d6–4; hp 12 each; Init +5; Spd 10 ft., swim 60 ft.; AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +2; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk +4 melee (1d6, masterwork quarterstaff) or +3 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SA smite good (+4 damage against a good foe) 1/day, spells; SQ damage reduction 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., resistance to cold 5, resistance to fire 5, spell resistance 9; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 9, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills: Craft (sculpting) +6, Heal +4, Knowledge (religion) +4, Listen +6, Spot +6, Swim +8.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff).

Spells Prepared (3/2, save DC 11 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds, ghost sound, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*cure light wounds, protection from good.*

Possessions: Masterwork quarterstaff, light crossbow, 20 bolts, airgill, 2 *potions of cure light wounds, potion of remove disease.* The adepts have not yet summoned familiars for themselves.

34. THE BLESSED OF INCABULOS (EL 5)

This large cave is unnaturally warm and humid. Thick carpets of seaweed and algae grow on the floors and walls here, and hang from the ceiling in great green sheets. The floor is pock-marked with numerous pits, the rim of each lined with jagged stones and shells. A new stink fills this chamber...unlike the stink of refuse, this is a stink of sickness and death.

Each of these pits is about 10 feet deep. The Deep Mother uses these pits to isolate her favorite subjects for disease cultivation. Currently, there are five locathah and three human prisoners found here, leaving two of the pits empty. Each

Wormwarts

Of all the strange new diseases in the Stink, the wormwarts are the most dangerous. The skin of a wormwarts victim breaks out in a mass of large crusty warts the size of raspberries. These warts persist for several hours before bursting open and emitting dozens of tiny filaments into the air. These filaments are actually miniscule worms that drift on air currents until they settle upon a new host. The worms can survive for only a few minutes outside a host, but in a heavily populated regions they can spread with frightening speed.

prisoner is suffering from a foul disease that the Deep Mother cultivated from the terrible conditions here in the Stink. Consult the "Blessings of Incabulos" sidebars for details on these diseases.

The hanging fronds of seaweed provide concealment, except when two creatures are within 5 feet of each other.

A character who falls into one of the pits not only takes 1d6 points of damage from the fall, but is exposed to the terrible disease in the pit and must make a Fortitude saving throw of the appropriate DC for that disease to avoid contracting the sickness.

Creatures: The Deep Mother's current favored consorts guard this chamber. They spend much of their time in the Deep Mother's chambers, but assuming that the fiendish locathahs are on alert, they have relocated to this room to ambush any intruders.

Fiendish Locathahs, Bbn2 (2): CR 3; Medium humanoid (aquatic, extraplanar) HD 2d8+2d12+4; hp 26 each; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., swim 60 ft.; AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +3; Grp +4; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d8+2/×3, *+1 longspear*) or +3 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SA rage 1/day, smite good (+4 damage against a good foe) 1/day; SQ damage reduction 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, resistance to cold 5, resistance to fire 5, spell resistance 9, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills: Climb +5, Craft (weaponsmithing) +6, Intimidate +4, Listen +6, Spot +6, Swim +8.

Feats: Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack.

Possessions: *+1 longspear*, light crossbow, 20 bolts, *+1 leather armor*, airgill.

Tactics: The barbarians prepare an ambush if they know the PCs are on their way. They hide in the hanging seaweed 10 feet from either side of the northern entrance and try to attack with surprise, raging at the start of the combat. Their favored tactic is to bull rush intruders into a convenient pit. They can even attack characters knocked into a pit with their longspears, since the pits are only 10 feet deep.

35. DEEP MOTHER'S LAIR (EL 6)

This cave is humid and foul smelling. Many piles of refuse and bodies of humans and locathahs lie in disturbingly organized mounds along the walls of this room, and a large tidepool sloshes to the south, its rim festooned with pale and diseased sea anemones.

This tide pool connects to the open sea via a long flooded tunnel; it does not connect to the other tide pools in the Stink's caverns. The pool itself is 20 feet deep. The Deep Mother, leader of the fiendish locathahs in the Stink, dwells in this cavern. She is responsible for the mounds of organized decay, each body and pile of refuse selected especially for the strange diseases cultivating in its core. None of these diseases are airborne yet, but any character who searches through the refuse and bodies is exposed to 1d4 random diseases from the "Blessings of Incabulos" sidebars, and must make a successful Fortitude save against each to avoid contracting the disease in question.

Creature: The Deep Mother spends much of her time mixing and cultivating the diseases, using spells like *curse water*, and *contagion* combined with her Craft Wondrous Item feat to encourage the growth. She maintains a *desecrate* spell in this cave at all times as well. If she knows the PCs are on the way, she prepares for their arrival by casting *animate dead* on the diseased bodies, transforming them into zombies. She creates six zombies from the bodies of humans and two from the bodies of locathahs; the *desecrate* spell allows her to animate twice as many undead as she normally can. She then retreats to the tide pool to hide and allow her undead to defend the chamber.

Deep Mother, female fiendish locathah Clr5: CR 6; Medium humanoid (aquatic); HD 7d8+7; hp 42; Init +4; Spd 10 ft., swim 60 ft.; AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +4; Grp +5; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, *+1 light mace*), or +9 ranged (1d8/19–20, masterwork light crossbow); SA

rebuke/command undead, smite good (+7 damage against a good foe) 1/day, spells; SQ damage reduction 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., resistance to cold 5, resistance to fire 5, spell resistance 12; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 18, Cha 13.

Skills: Concentration +6, Craft (alchemy) +7, Healing +9, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +9, Spellcraft +7, Spot +9, Swim +14.

Feats: Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item.

Spells Prepared (5/4+1/3+1/2+1; base DC 14 + spell level): 0—*create water* (2), *cure minor wounds* (2), *resistance*; 1st—*command, cure light wounds, divine favor, inflict light wounds*, shield of faith*; 2nd—*bear's endurance, desecrate* (2, one already cast), *shatter**; 3rd: *animate dead, contagion*, remove disease.*

*Domain Spell. *Domains*: Destruction (smite 1/day, +4 on attack, extra +5 damage), Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: +1 *light mace*, masterwork light crossbow, 10 bolts, small shield, leather armor, *periapt of health, potion of cure moderate wounds, 2 potions of remove disease.*

Human Zombies (6): hp 16 each; SA disease; other stats as *Monster Manual* 266.

Disease (Ex): These zombies are infected with skitterpox; creatures wounded by these zombies must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 12) each time they are hit to avoid catching this disease.

Locathah Zombies (2): CR 1; Medium undead; HD 4d12; hp 29 each; Init +0; Spd 10 ft., swim 60 ft.; AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +2; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, slam); SA disease; SQ damage reduction 5/slashing; single actions only; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Disease (Ex): These zombies are infected with dripskin; creatures wounded by these zombies must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 14) each time they are hit to avoid catching this disease.

Feats: Toughness.

Tactics. Once the PCs arrive and start fighting the zombies, the Deep Mother casts *bear's endurance, shield of faith,* and *divine favor* on herself and then emerges from the pool to aid her minions. She does not fight to the death, however, and if it looks like she's approaching a defeat she attempts to flee via the tide pool.

Development: One of the locathah zombies is in fact the ranger Kilorkus, leader of the locathah scouts from area 8. The locathah become dismayed if they learn of Kilorkus' terrible fate, but if the PCs return his body to them they are nonetheless thankful.

Ad-Hoc Experience Award: The PCs should earn 125% the normal XP award for this encounter due to the *desecrate* spell and diseased zombies.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the characters fail to disrupt the Deep Mother's plans, she unleashes her fiendish plagues upon the city of Suncliff at about the same time the locathah tribes launch a full-scale invasion of the city. The timing of the invasion and the Deep Mother's schedule are left vague—you can time them as you will to enhance the sense of drama in the adventure, or even to set up an epic campaign plotline involving plagues and invasion.

If the characters manage to defeat the Deep Mother's plans and drive the fiendish locathah out of the Stink, their actions go mostly unnoticed by the people and government of Suncliff. The populace may never know how close they came to devastating locathah raids and horrible plagues of fiendish diseases, but Popollo and the Wastewalkers' Guild do. With the fiendish locathah dealt with, Popollo and his employees begin to make real progress at cleaning up the Stink. He doesn't forget the services the PCs provided, and eventually makes good on the rewards he may have prom-

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

"The Stink" is designed for four 4th-level characters, but it can be modified for parties of lower or higher level. The adventure is more suitable when scaled down than up, since at 5th level, clerics and druids gain access to *remove disease*, which lessens the threat of the diseases in the Stink. Consider making further changes to the adventure as follows:

1st–3rd-level PCs: Run the adventure as written but with the following changes:

- Decrease any class levels possessed by NPCs by one or two.
- Replace all ghasts with ghouls, and all ghouls with zombies.
- Replace the Medium ooze paraelementals with Small ooze paraelementals.
- Remove all traps with a CR greater than 3.
- Reduce the Fortitude save DCs required to resist the diseases by –2.
- Area **2**: Replace the otyughs with carrion crawlers or Large monstrous centipedes.
- Area **6**: Replace the advanced otyugh with a regular otyugh.
- Area **16**: Replace the ochre jelly with a gray ooze.
- Area **28**: Replace the gibbering mouther with an ooze mephit.

5th–7th-level PCs: Run the adventure as written but with the following changes:

- Increase any class levels possessed by NPCs by one or two.
- Replace all ghouls with ghasts, and all ghasts with wights.
- Replace the Medium ooze paraelementals with Large ooze paraelementals.
- Increase the Fortitude save DCs to resist the diseases by +2.
- All non-classed fiendish locathah should gain one or two levels of fighter.
- Area **5**: Replace the dire rats with Large monstrous centipedes.
- Area **14**: Replace the gray ooze with an ochre jelly.
- Area **28**: Advance the gibbering mouther's Hit Dice by +4.

ised them. He does pay the PCs the promised 100 gp per rescued worker immediately, however.

Although rescuing the prisoners from the Stink is a noble goal, it carries with it a hidden danger. If the PCs simply return these prisoners to civilization without curing the diseases they carry, there is a very real chance these terrible diseases establish a foothold and begin to spread. The PCs themselves could serve as unwitting carriers if they have contracted one of the diseases. Fighting against the spread of these terrible diseases could form the backbone for an entire series of adventures in Suncliff.

If any of the fiendish locathahs (particularly the Deep Mother) survive and escape the Stink, they may return later with reinforcements. Perhaps they try to take Suncliff by force, or perhaps they simply seek out the PCs for revenge. The location of the deep underwater portal to Incabulos' realm can also serve as an adventure hook; what would happen if the Black Rider dispatched even more minions from his infected realm into the seas of your campaign world? Ω

Monte Lin is a freelance writer and an aspiring screenwriter who started gaming as soon as he received the old red-box DUNGEONS & DRAGONS *set as a present one fateful childhood morning. Before then, he spent some time lost in a sewer.*

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MOUNT ZOGON
GALEENA, DO YOU THINK WE WILL FIND A COLONY OF SENTIENT MUSHROOMS LIKE ME LIVING IN THE CAVES UNDER MOUNT ZOGON?
UH OH
MUSHROOM, MY FRIEND... I CREATED YOU IN DRUID SCHOOL. THERE ARE NO OTHER MUSHROOMS LIKE YOU .... ANYWHERE.
!
sigh
IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU HAVEN'T TOLD ME ABOUT MYSELF — BACK BEFORE I BECAME FULLY SENTIENT?
LET'S SEE... YOU CAME IN 3rd PLACE IN THE SCIENCE FAIR....
AEIII!

BY TONY MOSELEY

WARDUKE

HIERARCH OF THE HORNED SOCIETY

BY THE DUNGEON STAFF
ARTWORK BY WAYNE REYNOLDS

Nearly 100 years ago, the demigod Iuz vanished from the northern lands, imprisoned beneath Castle Greyhawk by the archmage Zagig Yragerne. In the violent chaos that followed, a group of thirteen black-hearted adventurers captured Iuz's "summer capital" of Molag and created the Horned Society, a nation based on the adoration of foul beings from the Lower Planes.

A returned Iuz's forces invaded the Horned Society's lands during the recent Greyhawk Wars, putting most of the order's malicious lords to the torch during the Festival of the Blood Moon. The Unnameable Hierarch, leader of the society, fell in that invasion, but rather than signaling the end of the order, his assassination triggered a new beginning for the Horned Society. The leader was reborn as a greater devil thanks to a pact with the archfiend Baalzebul, and with his newfound power the Unnameable Hierarch began to assemble a new Horned Society—a skulking, malevolent organization with poisonous tendrils threaded throughout the Flanaess.

The Unnameable Hierarch managed to rebuild his organization so quickly in large part due to the influence of a ruthless fighter named Warduke, a mysterious and relentless killer who emerged from nowhere after the Greyhawk Wars to spread terror and uncertainty among mercenaries, soldiers, and fighting societies from the Barrier Peaks to the Solnor Ocean.

Warduke is the soldier's bogeyman, the opponent seasoned veterans least hope to see when the battlefield fog clears and reveals the forces of the enemy. Tavern tales suggest Warduke's hand in the destruction of several complete adventuring parties, including Greyhawk's Company of the Sundered Shield and the Ramshorn Alliance of Chendl. Both groups had crossed lesser agents of the Horned Society in the weeks before their destruction, and the crowned devil heraldic device of the Society turned up at both slaughter sites. In both cases, Warduke had been seen in the area.

Warduke works alone, preferring to challenge enemies of the Horned Society in direct combat. He cares nothing for decorum, often assaulting his quarry as they emerge battered and tired after a dungeon crawl or prior battle. He speaks with a raspy, otherworldly voice and possesses a morbid sense of humor. He takes pleasure in brutality and tenaciously hounds his enemies.

TACTICS

Warduke rarely encounters enemies who can challenge him in combat. He often tries to deliberately surround himself with his enemies so he can lay waste with Whirlwind Attack. He usually devotes 2 points of his base attack bonus to his Armor Class (using Combat Expertise) and 5 points to Power Attack; if he finds he has trouble hitting a target he abandons this tactic. If facing an obviously superior foe, or a foe that can consistently stay out of melee range, he isn't afraid

to break off combat (usually by using a *word of recall* stored in his *helm*) to plot revenge for another day.

DEVELOPMENT

Warduke makes a perfect enemy for high-level "mightier than thou" PCs who think they can handle anything a DM can throw at them. If you don't use the Horned Society, make him a bigshot in your own evil organization, brought in as a special anti-adventurer agent just when your players are riding high on their latest victory. They may not thank you for it later, but they'll remember it forever. Ω

Warduke, Male Human Ftr18: CR 20; Medium humanoid (human); HD 18d10+162; hp 318; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 34, touch 16, flat-footed 29; Base Atk +18; Grp +29; Atk +34 melee (1d10+18+1d6 fire/17–20, *+3 bane vs. humans anarchic flaming burst bastard sword*); Full Atk +32/+27/+22/+17 melee (1d10+18+1d6 fire/17–20, *+3 bane vs. humans anarchic flaming burst bastard sword*) and +32 melee (1d8+6, shield bash); SA fear gaze, *death knell*; SQ damage reduction 3/—, immune to charm, low-light vision, *see invisibility*, spell resistance 27, *word of recall*; AL CE; SV Fort +20, Ref +9, Will +8; Str 32, Dex 16, Con 28, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 20.

Skills: Climb +32, Intimidate +35, Jump +32, Knowledge (the planes) +12, Survival +12 (+14 on other planes), Swim +14.

Feats: Combat Expertise, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Great Cleave, Greater Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Greater Weapon Specialization (bastard sword), Improved Critical (bastard sword), Improved Shield Bash, Mobility, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Spring Attack, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (bastard sword), Whirlwind Attack.

Languages: Common, Abyssal, Infernal.

Inherent Bonuses: Warduke has had several of his ability scores improved with inherent bonuses from *wish* spells, often granted to him as payment for particularly important missions. He has a +5 inherent bonus to Strength, a +4 inherent bonus to Constitution, and a +4 inherent bonus to Charisma.

Possessions: +3 bane vs. humans anarchic flaming burst bastard sword, dagger of venom, +3 moderate fortification adamantine ceremonial spiked half-plate, +5 bashing heavy steel shield, Warduke's helm, amulet of health +6, gauntlets of giant strength +6, boots of speed, ring of protection +3, fearsome eye fiendish graft.

Fearsome Eye: This fiendish graft is bright red in color and has a black iris. It grants the grafted creature the ability to continuously *see invisibility* as the spell from a 20th–level caster. In addition, the grafted creature gains a fear gaze attack. Anyone within 30 feet of the grafted creature that meets its eyes must make a Will saving throw (DC 16) or be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds. Normally, the save DC against this effect reflects a +2 bonus, but since both of Warduke's eyes are fearsome eyes, he gains the full +4 bonus to this DC. The grafted creature is immune to this gaze attack.

The *Fiend Folio* has full rules for fiendish grafts.

Warduke's Helm (major artifact): Warduke gained his helm from the Unnameable Hierarch himself as payment for a particularly destructive and successful mission. The *helm* is infused with powerful evil, and bestows 2 negative levels on any non-evil creature that puts it on. If a lawful good creature puts on the helm, the faceplate vanishes and long spikes begin to grow from the inner surface of the *helm*, dealing 2d6 points of slashing damage per round to the victim.

An evil creature gains several benefits by wearing the *helm*. It grants low-light vision to the wearer, as well as a natural armor bonus equal to his Charisma modifier (minimum of +1). The wearer gains a +10 competence bonus on Intimidate checks. The wearer also gains SR 10 + his character level, as well as complete immunity to all Charm effects.

The faceplate of the helm is set with three rubies, one of which is much larger than the other two. The two smaller rubies each allow the wearer to cast a quickened still silent *death knell*. When the user casts this spell, one of the two small rubies glows red for the duration of the effect. As long as a ruby is glowing, it cannot cast a *death knell*; thus, Warduke can be under the effects of two *death knells* from his helm at a time.

The large ruby can store a single spell of up to 6th level, as a *ring of spell storing*. The wearer can cast this spell as a quickened still silent spell. Warduke typically keeps a *word of recall* spell stored here for emergencies.

Note: Warduke has far better statistics and better possessions (including a major artifact) than most NPCs of his level possess. As a result, his CR is +2 higher than normal.

CEREMONIAL ARMOR

Ceremonial armor is typically worn not for combat but for show, or to intimidate or impress. A suit of ceremonial armor costs twice as much as normal masterwork armor (but is not necessarily itself masterwork), and consists of about half the actual armor of a normal suit. Ceremonial armor weighs half as much as the normal armor, and provides half the armor bonus of the standard armor, rounded down. The maximum Dexterity bonus for ceremonial armor increases by +1, the armor check penalty is reduced by 2 points (to a minimum penalty of 0), and it does not impact the wearer's speed. Arcane spell failure chances for ceremonial armor are half normal. Despite these changes, the category of a suit of ceremonial armor (light, medium, or heavy) does not change; although a suit of ceremonial full plate may only provide the same protection as a regular chain shirt, it still requires the Heavy Armor Proficiency feat to wear properly.